

AN
EXHORTATION
TO A
DILIGENT USE
OF THE
MEANS of GRACE;
TOGETHER WITH
A SERIOUS ADDRESS
TO
Persons of every Character, professing the
Christian Religion.
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
FORMS of DEVOTION,
AND
HYMNS,
ON
VARIOUS OCCASIONS;
Extracted from the Writings of several
EMINENT DIVINES. *K*

By JOHN SMITH, D. D.
RECTOR of NANTWICH, CHESHIRE.

I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation—*Heb. xiii. 22.*

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure—*2. Pet. i. 10.*

S H R E W S B U R Y:

Printed and sold by T. Wood; sold also by J. MATTHEWS,
in the Strand, LONDON. 1785.

EXHORTATION

TO A

DILIGENT USE

OF THE

MEANS OF GRACE;

TOGETHER WITH

A SERIOUS ADDRESS

Persons of every rank, professing the
Christian Religion.



TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

FORMS OF DEVOTION,

AND

H Y M N S,

ON

VARIOUS OCCASIONS;

Extracted from the Writings of several
Eminent Divines.

By JOHN SMITH, D.D.

RECTOR OF MANTWICH CHURCH.

I beseech your prayers, that the word of exhorta-
tion may be attended to with diligence to make your calling and election sure—
A.M.C. 10.

Printed and sold by T. Wood, Stationer, J. Matthews,
in the Strand, London, 1782.

To the INHABITANTS of NANTWICH,
in the County of CHESTER.

My Dear Brethren,

THE sacred office in which I am engaged, and the relation I bear to you as your minister, indispensably oblige me at all times, and upon all occasions, to be instant in season and out of season, in order to promote your spiritual and eternal welfare. To accomplish this great work, I can think of no method more effectual than to present to your view a plain account of the various MEANS OF GRACE, which God hath been pleased to establish in his church, and to exhort you to make a faithful and diligent use of them. — This design appears to me the more needful, because, (tho' we have many excellent detached treatises on the subject,) yet I know of no writer who has given a comprehensive view of it in one and the same publication, and in a plain, and evangelical manner.

This I have attempted in the following work; and tho' I am sensible of many imperfections in the execution of my design, yet I hope the benevolence of the intention will (among you at least) procure it a favorable reception.

God can do great things by such instruments as in human estimation often appear most unlikely and unpromising; and, in an humble hope of his blessing, I have resolved to commit this work to the press; being fully assured, that if he should think proper to bless, it shall indeed be blessed.

As

As far as I know my own heart, I can truly declare, that this humble essay is honestly intended to promote your best and greatest interest.—I sincerely pray that the giver of every good and perfect gift may make it instrumental in contributing to his glory, and in exciting you all to attend more diligently to the one thing needful. Luke x. 42.—Many of you, alas! are very negligent in this weighty concern, which makes it the more my duty plainly to warn you, both of your sin and danger.—Though I should be glad, at all times, to converse with you on religious subjects, and to pay all possible attention to the welfare of every individual committed to my charge; yet, as in populous parishes (such as that of Nantwich) it is utterly impracticable for any minister, however conscientious, to pay that exact regard to the soul of each parishioner, which he wishes to do. In order to supply this lack of personal service in the best manner I am able, I beg leave to put into your hands the following sheets; and whenever you look into them, I desire, tho' absent, that you will consider me either as instructing you in your duty, or warning you to flee from the wrath to come.—Nay, it may happen (thro' the Divine Blessing) that when I am released from the troubles and sorrows of this transitory state, I may, tho' dead, yet speak (in and by this publication,) to the honour of my Redeemer, and the good of souls.—This is my sincere wish; may the God of all grace grant it's accomplishment in many, very many instances!

As

As it is incumbent on every faithful minister to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of his people, I shall now further observe, that an obligation, in some respects similar, devolves on every lay-man, who is the head of a family; and that, according to his respective talents and abilities, he is indispensably obliged to have regard to the spiritual welfare of his domestic charge, as a clergyman is to superintend the inspection, reformation, and edification of his parish at large.

—Hear what a solemn injunction God gives you to this purpose: “These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” (Deut. vi. 6, 7.)—In the name of the Most High God, therefore, and of the Lord Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, I call upon you who are the heads of families, and upon such of you as are at all concerned in the education of youth, to join your endeavours with mine, to promote the immortal interests of all under your care. For, whether you are parents, masters, or teachers, you are under the most solemn obligations, by virtue of your several relations, connections, and offices in life, to do so; and, if you neglect it, great will be your guilt, and insupportable your punishment.

*Give me leave to conclude this address in the words of a judicious writer: “I address you
“in*

“ in print, because the houses where I propose
 “ to leave, (or have this left) are too many to
 “ admit of it in writing; which moreover you
 “ would few of you make out so readily.—I
 “ might have applied to you personally from house
 “ to house; but it would have been long before
 “ I could have found you so easily as this will,
 “ and longer still before an opportunity would
 “ have presented itself of entering so fully upon
 “ the several subjects treated on in this publica-
 “ tion.—Besides, the business of the conversation
 “ would too probably die with the sound of my
 “ voice. It is possible, indeed, for you to pay as
 “ little regard to this book, as to a conversation
 “ on religious subjects; but this method of appli-
 “ cation entirely strips you of every plea.—You
 “ might forget, or pretend to forget, arguments
 “ once urged; but you cannot pretend to forget
 “ any argument contained in this book; for, this
 “ remains with you. I pray God it may not wit-
 “ ness against you; but however that may be, my
 “ conscience is now entirely satisfied, and your
 “ blood, if you persevere in your sins, is, and will
 “ be, upon yourselves.”

May we all seriously consider these things and
 pray diligently for the grace of God, that we may
 effectually turn from every evil way, and apply
 our hearts to true wisdom!—This is the earnest
 wish; this too is the sincere prayer of,

Your affectionate Pastor, and faithful Servant
 in the Lord Jesus Christ,

JOHN SMITH.

January 31, 1785.

I N D E X.

	<i>Page.</i>
SECTION I. <i>Preliminary Observations</i> <i>concerning the Means of Grace.</i> —	1
SECT. II. <i>Of Baptism.</i> —	9
SECT. III. <i>Of Public Worship.</i> —	25
SECT. IV. <i>Of Private Worship.</i> —	43
SECT. V. <i>Of Family Worship.</i> —	53
SECT. VI. <i>Of Catechising Children and</i> <i>Servants.</i> —	67
SECT. VII. <i>Of Confirmation.</i> —	84
SECT. VIII. <i>Of Reading the Scriptures.</i> —	97
SECT. IX. <i>Of Psalmody.</i> —	114
SECT. X. <i>Of the same.</i> —	132
SECT. XI. <i>Of Religious Conversation.</i> —	141
SECT. XII. <i>Of Self-Examination.</i> —	157
SECT. XIII. <i>Of the Lord's Supper.</i> —	170
SECT. XIV. <i>Of Fasting.</i> —	185
SECT. XV. <i>An Address to the ignorant</i> <i>Professor, notorious Sinner, and the proud</i> <i>Formalist.</i> —	198
<i>A Morning Prayer for a Family.</i> —	229
<i>Another.</i> —	232
<i>Another.</i> —	236
<i>An Evening Prayer for a Family</i> —	239
<i>Another.</i> —	243
<i>Another.</i> —	247
<i>A Prayer for Lord's Day Morning.</i> —	249
<i>A Prayer for Lord's Day Evening.</i> —	254
<i>A Prayer</i>	

	<i>Page</i>
<i>A Prayer for a Family when any Member of it is Sick.</i>	258
<i>A Morning Prayer for a private Person.</i>	264
<i>An Evening Prayer for a private Person.</i>	267
<i>A Prayer for one convinced of Sin.</i>	269
<i>A Prayer for the Increase of Faith in Christ.</i>	273
<i>A Prayer for Repentance.</i>	275
<i>A Prayer, when under the Pressure of some heavy Affliction.</i>	279
<i>A Prayer for a Person under deep Melan- choly and Dejection of Spirits.</i>	283
<i>A Prayer in Time of Temptation.</i>	284
<i>A Prayer before the Sacrament.</i>	286
<i>A Prayer after the Sacrament.</i>	288
<i>A Prayer for a Child, to be used Morning and Evening.</i>	291
<i>A Prayer to be used before the Reading of God's Word.</i>	292
<i>A Prayer to be used after the Reading of God's Word.</i>	294
<i>A Prayer to be used before the Hearing of God's Word.</i>	296
<i>A Prayer to be used after the Hearing of God's Word.</i>	298
<i>A Prayer for a Person going a Journey.</i>	300
<i>A Thanksgiving for a Person after a Journey.</i>	302
<i>A Prayer before expounding the Holy Scriptures.</i>	303
<i>A Prayer after expounding the Holy Scriptures.</i>	305
<i>Hymns.</i>	309
<i>Postscript.</i>	

THE
 NAMES
 OF THE
 SUBSCRIBERS.

	No. of Copies.
The Most Rev. the Arch-Bishop of <i>Cashel</i> , in the Kingdom of <i>Ireland</i> —	4
Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of <i>Chester</i> —	4
A.	
Mr. Alexander, <i>Almondbury, Yorkshire</i> —	1
B.	
Samuel Barrow, Esq; <i>Nantwich</i> —	1
Rev. Mr. Briggs, Chancellor, <i>Chester</i> —	1
Rev. Mr. Bailett, <i>Handley</i> —	1
Rev. Mr. Bridge, <i>Malpas</i> —	1
Mr. Billington, <i>Nantwich</i> —	1
Mr. Bate, Attorney at Law, <i>Nantwich</i> —	1
Mr. Barnett, <i>Birmingham</i> —	1
Mr. Brooke, <i>Malpas</i> —	1
Mr. Beckett, <i>Newcastle</i> —	1
Mr. Bramhill, <i>Nantwich</i> —	1
B	Mr.

SUBSCRIBERS NAMES.

No. of
Copies.

C.

John Crewe, Esq; <i>Bolesworth-Castle</i>	4
Mr. Cartwright, Apothecary, <i>Shrewsbury</i>	1
Mr. James Cheney, <i>Nantwich</i>	1

D.

Rev. Bennet Dorset, L. L. B. <i>Wytheford</i>	
<i>Magna, Salop</i>	2
Rev. Mr. De Courcy, Vicar of <i>St. Alkmund's,</i>	
<i>Shrewsbury</i>	1
Samuel Davies, Esq; <i>Drayton</i>	1
Mr. Darlington, <i>Brindley</i>	1
Mrs. D——, <i>Liverpool</i>	1
Mr. Dickens, <i>Dorfold</i>	1

G.

Mr. Glenny, <i>Liverpool</i>	3
Mr. Grosvenor, Surgeon, <i>Drayton</i>	1
Mr. Gyles, Grocer, <i>Nantwich</i>	1
Mrs. Gwillin, <i>Malpas</i>	1
Mr. Green, <i>Woore</i>	1
Mr. Gleave, Surgeon, <i>Liverpool</i>	1

H.

Sir Richard Hill, Bart. <i>Hawkstone</i>	2
Rev. Mr. Robert Hill, <i>Hough</i>	1
Rev. Mr. Hunter, Vicar of <i>Weaverham</i>	1
Rev. Mr. Halward, late Vicar of <i>Shawbury</i>	1
Rev. Mr. Heber, <i>Malpas</i>	2
Mr. William Hewitt, <i>Nantwich</i>	1
Mr. John Hewitt, <i>Nantwich</i>	1

Mr.

SUBSCRIBERS NAMES.

xi
No. of
Copies.

Mr. Hyde, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	2
Mr. John Hewitt, for his Friend	—	1
Mr. Hamnett, Supervisor of Salt	—	1
Mrs. Hill, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	1
Mr. Heyes, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	1
Mr. Holford, <i>Malpas</i>	—	1
Mr. Hewitt, Merchant, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	1
Mr. Henshaw, Attorney at Law, <i>Wem</i>	—	1
Miss E. Heber, <i>Malpas</i>	—	1
Mr. Houghton, Merchant, <i>Liverpool</i>	—	3
Mr. Abel-Humphries, <i>Birmingham</i>	—	1
Miss Hand, <i>Lichfield</i>	—	1

I.

Rev. Dr. Illingworth, <i>London</i>	—	1
-------------------------------------	---	---

J.

Rev. Mr. Judgson, Rector of <i>Hinckley</i>	—	1
Rev. Mr. Jones, Curate of <i>St. Alkmunds,</i> <i>Shrewsbury</i>	—	1

K.

Rev. Mr. Kent, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	1
Mr. Kent, Apothecary, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	1
Mr. Kirkpatrick, Draper, <i>Whitchurch</i>	—	2

L.

Sir Robert Lawley, Bart.	—	1
Mr. Liverfage, <i>Nantwich</i>	—	1
Mr. Lynn, Surgeon, <i>Liverpool</i>	—	1
Mr. Lee, <i>Birmingham</i>	—	1

B 2

Rev.

M.

- Rev. Dr. Maurice, Fellow of the Collegiate
Church at Manchester 1
Rev. Mr. Mayor, Vicar of Prestbury 2
Mr. Miller, Custom-house, Liverpool 1
Mr. Manning, Chester 1
Mr. Meakin, Surgeon, Whitchurch 1

N.

- Mr. Isaac Nind, Owerbury, Worcestershire 1
Mr. Jonathan Nixon, Malpas 1

P.

- Rev. Dr. Peploe, late Chancellor of Chester 2
Rev. Emanuel Page, Vicar of Frodsham 2
Rev. Mr. Pearce, Prebendary of Chester 1
Rev. Mr. Pugh, Wem — 1
Rev. Mr. Powell, deceased, late Curate of
St. Almonds, Shrewsbury 1
Mrs. Payne, Nantwich 1
Mr. Plett, Attorney at Law, Chester — 1

R.

- Mr. Radcliffe, Mercer, Nantwich 1
Mr. Roylece, Malpas 1

S.

- Rev. Dr. Smith, Dean of Chester 1
Rev. Mr. Seward, Canon of Lichfield 1
Rev. Mr. Scott, Wollerton 1
Rev. Richard Smith, Colehill Hale 1

SUBSCRIBERS NAMES.

xiii
No. of
Copies,

Hugh Speed, Esq; Deputy-Register, <i>Chester</i>	I
Thomas Starkey, Esq; <i>Wrenbury-Hall</i>	I
Mr. Smith, Attorney, <i>Chester</i> —	I
Mr. Smith, Attorney, <i>Whitchurch</i> —	I
Mr. Daniel Smith, Merchant, <i>Chester</i>	I
Mr. Snelfon, Stationer, <i>Nantwich</i> —	I
Mr. Sigworth, <i>London</i> —	I
Mr. Skerrett, Surgeon, <i>Malpas</i> —	I
Mr. Strettell, Draper, <i>Nantwich</i> —	I
Mr. Stone, Merchant, <i>Dublin</i> —	I

T,

Rev. Dr. Townson, <i>Malpas</i> —	I
Rev. Mr. Tomkies, <i>Ofwestry</i> —	I
Rev. Mr. Turner, <i>Malpas</i> —	I
Mr. Tutin, <i>Birmingham</i> —	I

V.

Samuel Vernon, Esq; <i>Middlewich</i> —	I
Mr. Vernon, <i>Hurlstone</i> —	I

W.

Rev. Mr. Ward, Arch-Deacon of <i>Chester</i>	I
Mr. R. Wickstead, Surgeon, <i>Nantwich</i>	I
Mr. Wrench, fenior, <i>But-Green</i> —	I
Mr. Watfon, Attorney, <i>Whitchurch</i>	I
Mr. Waterworth, <i>Liverpool</i> —	I
Mrs. Wicksted, <i>Audlem</i> —	I
Mr. Wood, Printer, <i>Shrewsbury</i> —	I

Y.

Mifs Yate, <i>Shrewsbury</i> —	I
--------------------------------	---

1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900

1901
1902
1903
1904
1905
1906
1907
1908
1909
1910
1911
1912
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926
1927
1928
1929
1930
1931
1932
1933
1934
1935
1936
1937
1938
1939
1940
1941
1942
1943
1944
1945
1946
1947
1948
1949
1950
1951
1952
1953
1954
1955
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962
1963
1964
1965
1966
1967
1968
1969
1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000

2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030
2031
2032
2033
2034
2035
2036
2037
2038
2039
2040
2041
2042
2043
2044
2045
2046
2047
2048
2049
2050
2051
2052
2053
2054
2055
2056
2057
2058
2059
2060
2061
2062
2063
2064
2065
2066
2067
2068
2069
2070
2071
2072
2073
2074
2075
2076
2077
2078
2079
2080
2081
2082
2083
2084
2085
2086
2087
2088
2089
2090
2091
2092
2093
2094
2095
2096
2097
2098
2099
2100

E R R A T A.

Page	10	Line	16	for	conceived	read	conceived.
—	44	—	6	—	are	—	were.
—	49	—	12	—	applications	—	anticipation.
—	55	—	4	—	pray for	—	practice.
—	64	—	13	—	understandings	—	undertakings;
—	67	—	21	—	promise	—	purpose.
—	74	—		after	because	insert	of.
—	80	—	10	for	actual	read	occasional.
—	80	—	22	—	satisfaction	—	salvation.
—	82	—	26	—	to	—	do.
—	83	—	14	—	the	—	their.
—	85	line 2		in the note,	for to	—	of.
—	140	line	1	for	now	—	once more.
—	157	—	17	—	the	—	his.
—	171	—	23	after	soul dele	together.	
—	173	—	5	for	outward	read	inward.
—	175	—	23	after	is dele	not.	
—	179	—	20	for	right	read	night.
—	191	—	12	—	works	—	working.
—	195	—	23	—	heavily	—	heartily.
—	199	—	25	after	unto	insert	your.
—	206	—	1	after	your	read	soul is.
—	206	—	27	after	buy	insert	of me.
—	209	—	17	after	justify	read	your for our.

F R A

Page	to	from	for	amount	two	amount
44	—	0	—	—	—	—
45	—	12	—	—	—	—
46	—	4	—	—	—	—
47	—	11	—	—	—	—
48	—	21	—	—	—	—
49	—	26	—	—	—	—
50	—	30	—	—	—	—
51	—	32	—	—	—	—
52	—	33	—	—	—	—
53	—	34	—	—	—	—
54	—	35	—	—	—	—
55	—	36	—	—	—	—
56	—	37	—	—	—	—
57	—	38	—	—	—	—
58	—	39	—	—	—	—
59	—	40	—	—	—	—
60	—	41	—	—	—	—
61	—	42	—	—	—	—
62	—	43	—	—	—	—
63	—	44	—	—	—	—
64	—	45	—	—	—	—
65	—	46	—	—	—	—
66	—	47	—	—	—	—
67	—	48	—	—	—	—
68	—	49	—	—	—	—
69	—	50	—	—	—	—
70	—	51	—	—	—	—
71	—	52	—	—	—	—
72	—	53	—	—	—	—
73	—	54	—	—	—	—
74	—	55	—	—	—	—
75	—	56	—	—	—	—
76	—	57	—	—	—	—
77	—	58	—	—	—	—
78	—	59	—	—	—	—
79	—	60	—	—	—	—
80	—	61	—	—	—	—
81	—	62	—	—	—	—
82	—	63	—	—	—	—
83	—	64	—	—	—	—
84	—	65	—	—	—	—
85	—	66	—	—	—	—
86	—	67	—	—	—	—
87	—	68	—	—	—	—
88	—	69	—	—	—	—
89	—	70	—	—	—	—
90	—	71	—	—	—	—
91	—	72	—	—	—	—
92	—	73	—	—	—	—
93	—	74	—	—	—	—
94	—	75	—	—	—	—
95	—	76	—	—	—	—
96	—	77	—	—	—	—
97	—	78	—	—	—	—
98	—	79	—	—	—	—
99	—	80	—	—	—	—
100	—	81	—	—	—	—

nothing seems more suited, than exhortations
to a diligent use of the means of GRACE.
By the means of grace, we are to understand
all those divine ordinances whether of a public

or private nature, which our Lord, out of great
condescension to our infirmities, hath been
pleased to institute, and which, when properly used, they
become to many sacred channels through
which divine grace is conveyed to the human

SECTION I.
the are nourished, and cherished there, till
Preliminary Observations concerning the MEANS
do not operate by any absolute

IF we look around us, and observe with
what indifference religion is treated by
the generality of mankind, we shall find the
greatest reason to be deeply affected and con-
cerned on this account.—To obviate the in-
fluence, and stem the torrent of this prevailing
indifference, it becomes the duty, and will
be the endeavour of every true christian, pro-
portionably to advance, as far as in him lieth,
the interests of true christianity, in the world
in general, and to give it new life and power
among its professors, in particular.—With a
view to the accomplishing these desirable ends,

nothing

nothing seems more suited, than exhortations
TO A DILIGENT USE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE:

By the means of grace, we are to understand all those divine ordinances whether of a public or private nature, which our Lord, out of great condescension to our infirmities, hath been pleased to institute. They are called means of grace, because, when properly used, they become so many sacred channels, through which divine grace is conveyed to the human heart, and through which the seeds of eternal life are nourished, and cherished there, 'till they are matured in glory. These institutions do not operate of themselves, by any absolute and necessary virtue, *ex opere operato*, as the Papists teach; but are subordinate to, and require to be acted upon by a supernatural influence, in order to render them *efficacious*. A truth this, which matter of fact, in ten thousand instances, daily confirms; since it is an indisputable point, that multitudes attend the *means* of grace, without ever experiencing the *grace* of the means.

Some of the ordinances are intended to convey the knowledge of divine truths, of which we could never have entertained an idea, without a revelation: others are calculated to beget in the heart that saving faith in
the

the Son of God, without which we can perform nothing acceptable in his sight ; for “ faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by “ the word of God :” some, by outward symbols, represent our original pollution, and the method of our purification ; and others, by exhibiting to our senses, elements figurative of the most glorious realities, and commemorative of the most glorious acts of redeeming love, tend to keep fresh upon the mind a memorial of truths, of which, since the fall, we are lamentably forgetful ; others are wisely ordained, under the Divine Spirit, to increase, to quicken and keep alive the spark of divine grace in the heart, by opening and maintaining an intercourse with that fountain of life, from whence all our spiritual supplies issue ; and all the ordinances, considered in their respective intention, and reciprocal dependence or connection, subserve the great purposes of maintaining the honour of God ; of declaring the supreme authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the unrivalled Head of the Church ; of preserving uncorrupt the worship of the true God, Father, Son, and Spirit in one Jehovah, amidst all the abounding of heresy and irreligion ; of instructing us in the knowledge of Him, whom to know

is

Is eternal life, by leading us to a consideration of our extreme poverty, blindness, wretchedness, and guilt, and the all-sufficiency of Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; of profiting ourselves, and building up one another in our most holy faith; of testifying our love, and avowing our adherence to the cause of God and truth; and of anticipating the blessedness of those spirits in the upper court of Zion, who "serve God continually" and worship him day and night in his "celestial temple."

I am sensible, however, that many, too many alas! use those means, who never attain these ends. If it be asked how this happens? I answer, as the means themselves are holy, just and good, the fault, consequently, cannot be in them, but must be in the hearts of men, who use them with an improper temper of mind, and for improper purposes. They may be said to do this when they use them without faith and sincerity, without reverence and humility, without assiduity and charity; or, when, to be seen of men, to raise their reputation, and establish a justifying righteousness, are their grand aim. A diligent attendance on the means, is certainly obligatory

upon all, since God has appointed them; and enjoined us to do so.—But we must not, in the least, *trust* in them, or in ourselves, for having observed them, but only in the living God, and in Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. If we use them in any other view, or for any other religious ends, we wretchedly deceive ourselves, provoke God, and injure our own souls. I beg you will pay a serious attention to this observation; if you neglect to do so, you may, indeed, use the means of grace as long as you live; but I will venture to assert that you neither can nor will promote either the divine glory, or your own salvation by so doing. On the contrary, you will, like the Pharisees of old, grow spiritually proud and conceited of your own righteousness; you will sink into a lifeless form of godliness, whilst you are entirely destitute of the power thereof. In short, you will rest in your own imperfect works, which, when compared with the perfect rule of God's law, are but as filthy rags; and you will trust in them either wholly or in part, instead of trusting in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is called in Scripture, “The Lord our Righteousness,” and who is “of God, made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”

"demption."—"He that glorieth therefore,
 "let him glory in the Lord."—1. Cor. i. 30,
 31, even in that all-sufficient and adorable
 Redeemer, who is the "Sure Foundation laid
 "in Zion," upon which all our hopes of sal-
 vation and acceptance in religious duties must
 altogether be built. If, otherwise, our hope
 is the hope of the hypocrite, and will un-
 doubtedly perish. Remember that Christ is
 the way, the truth, and the life; and "there
 "is no other name given among men, where-
 "by we must be saved;"—"He that believ-
 "eth in him, out of his belly" (as the scrip-
 ture expresses it) "shall flow rivers of living
 water;" but "he that believeth not in him,
 "shall not see life, but the wrath of God
 "abideth on him." These scriptural decla-
 rations make it plain and evident, that no
 man cometh, or can come unto the Father,
 (that is, to the throne of grace with ac-
 ceptance here, or to heaven hereafter) but
 only through Jesus Christ. Build no longer,
 therefore, your eternal hopes on your own
 performances; tread no longer a lifeless round
 of duties as a penance enjoined of God to
 escape damnation, and to secure his favour.
 To all formal and self-justifying professors,

the Almighty speaks thus in his most holy word: "Wherefore do ye spend your money
 "for that which is not bread, and your labor
 "for that which satisfieth not? Hearken
 "diligently unto me, and eat ye that which
 "is good, and let your soul delight itself in
 "fatness; for I will give you the sure mer-
 "cies of David. Behold I have given him
 "for a witness (of my free grace and love) to
 "the people, a leader and commander to the
 "people"—*Isa.* lv. 2, 3, 4. Be careful, there-
 fore, to make Christ the Alpha and Omega;
 the first and the last, the beginning and the
 end of all your religious duties; and the
 peace of God which passeth all understanding
 shall rule in your hearts here, and the bles-
 sing of God shall remain with you for ever.

Having thus given you an Exhortation
 to a diligent use of the means of grace,
 and likewise a caution against the abuse
 of them, I beg leave to observe that *the*
means of grace are these, baptism, public-
 worship, private-worship, family-worship,
 catechising of children, reading and medi-
 tating on the scriptures, psalmody, religious
 conversation, self-examination, receiving the
 sacrament; to which we may add, the duties
 of

of fasting and alms-giving, which, if they may not be considered as *principal*, may yet be esteemed as *subordinate means*, and, when duly discharged, do certainly tend both to the glory of God, and the good of men.

SECTION

I shall now in your hearts here, and the blessing of God shall remain with you for ever. Having thus given you an Exhortation to a diligent use of the means of grace, and likewise a caution against the abuse of them, I beg leave to observe that the means of grace are such, baptism, public worship, private worship, family-worship, catechising of children, reading and meditation on the scriptures, charity, religious conversation, self-examination, receiving the sacrament; to which we may add, the duties of

SECTION II.

OF BAPTISM.

THE holy sacrament of Baptism was appointed by our blessed Saviour Christ, and is that standing ordinance by which we become initiated members of his visible church. Before our Redeemer left the world in order to return to his Father, he gave this express command to his Apostles: "Go ye therefore, and teach (*μαθητεύσατε* *disciple*) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" adding, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned." Our Lord has appointed this holy ordinance, as the only regular method of introducing persons to those other privileges, peculiar to the new testament church. But, something more than a mere submission to the outward and visible sign is necessary. For, "except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The privileges conferred upon him who is baptized with the Spirit, as well as with water, are

B

truly

truly great and glorious ; for, “ he is made
 “ a member of Christ, the child of God, and
 “ an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.—
 He is made a member of Christ, that is, he
 who was naturally without Christ, being an
 alien, from the common wealth of Israel, a
 stranger to the covenant of promise, having
 no hope, and without God in the world.—
Ep. ii. 12. He who was thus naturally
 estranged from the ways and truth of God, is
 now, by that which is signified in baptism,
 made a spiritual member of his mystical body
 the church, of which Christ is the head.
 Again, every baptized christian, or true be-
 liever in Christ, is made a child of God. He
 who was conceived and born in sin, and by
 nature a child of wrath, is, by regeneration,
 received into the number of God’s children,
 and made a son of God by adoption and grace.
 Lastly, every one savingly influenced in the
 sacrament of baptism, is made an inheritor of
 the kingdom of heaven, becomes invested with
 the privileges and blessings appropriated to
 that new dispensation often styled the king-
 dom of heaven, because of its divine origin,
 the spiritual glory of the Prince of Peace, who
 presides in it, and the spiritual immunities

its subjects; and is constituted, moreover, an heir of the kingdom of glory, to which he has, through Christ, a just right and title; and baptism is a sacramentary seal to confirm the possession of that kingdom, and an interest in the righteousness of Christ, which makes the title to it valid. This is plain from the Apostle's words: "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," who is heir of all things, and therefore, through him, all true believers shall also inherit all things in everlasting glory—*Rom. viii. 17.*

These invaluable privileges are symbolically represented to all christians in their baptism; and are the certain pledges or first-fruits of that complete happiness, which they shall possess in the eternal kingdom of God. Our title to the blessings of the gospel, depends on the full and free promises of God, that he will give pardon, grace, and glory to his people, to whom it is granted truly to repent and believe in Jesus Christ. Let us see whether our character be correspondent with that of those highly-favored persons, who receive those promises, and inherit those blessings. This we shall be assisted in doing, if we at-

tentively consider what our *suresties*,* at baptism, promised for us. The promises they then made in our names were, 1st. That we

* Our church has thought fit to retain the ancient use of witnesses, at the naming of children, or *suresties* in baptism. Indeed, names were usually given to infants, when they were received into the church by circumcision, (*Luke* ii. 21.) to which baptism is a correspondent sacrament—*Col.* ii. 11, 12. This custom of requiring *suresties*, is, in itself, both wise and prudent; hereby religious care is taken for the pious education of the baptised children, especially in case of the mortality, (*Eph.* ii. 7.) or negligence of parents. All sponsors are solemnly charged by the church, to see that the infant (which they answer for) be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, he has at baptism, made by them. They are further enjoined to call upon him to hear sermons, and to provide that he may learn the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments IN THE VULGAR TONGUE, and all other things which a christian ought to know and believe, to his soul's health; and they are further required to take care that the child be bro't up to lead a godly and a christian life.† What pity is it that this solemn charge is so little regarded? Were it but seriously considered, and conscientiously observed, it would greatly tend to the glory of God, the edification of his church, and the spiritual good of the *suresties* themselves. But instead of producing these desirable effects, it is too generally regarded as mere matter of form. The office of sponsor is considered as a compliment due to relations, or friends, and seldom (if ever) afterwards thought of, at least to any *serious* purposes. I must beg leave to remind these *impious* triflers with God, and their own consciences, that though they may forget, or make light of this solemn engagement, it is most assuredly remembered by the searcher of hearts; it is recorded in his book, and will (if they die in their sins) be produced against them at the last day, to their eternal confusion.

† See the office of Public Baptism.

should

should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. — 2dly. That we should believe all the articles of the christian faith. — 3dly. That we should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our lives. 1. The first thing promised in behalf of the baptised person, is a renunciation of his three spiritual enemies, which are the devil, the world, and the flesh. The first spiritual enemy renounced here is the devil; He is an evil spirit, or fallen angel, and is to be renounced because he is an enemy to God, and all goodness. He first tempteth to sin, then accuses for it, and hinders us (so far as he can) from doing good. The works of the devil, are, in general, all sins committed by his instigation; and particularly those which are committed after his example, such as murder, lying, cruelty, malice, pride, envy, and enticing others to sin. They who give themselves up to any of these abominable vices, plainly shew that they are of their father the devil; and we know that there is no agreement between light and darkness; between Christ and Belial. 2. The second enemy renounced in baptism, is, this wicked world,

world, with its pomps and vanities.—By the world, is here not meant the frame of created nature, which, as it is the workmanship of the all-perfect God, is, and must be in itself good; though miserably defiled by the sins of its inhabitants. But, by the world we are here to understand those men of the world, (*John* xv. 19.) who are enemies to godliness, and those other creatures in the world, which the devil, the prince of it, uses as snares to seduce men to sin—1. *John* ii. 15—*Matt.* iv. 8, 9. “The pomps and vanities of this “wicked world,” are all those ensnaring objects of riches, pleasures, and honors, including the avidity with which they are pursued; and the intemperate manner in which they are used, by which the wicked are drowned in perdition; of which the Apostle gives a concise, but melancholy detail in 1. *John* ii. 16. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. The third spiritual enemy renounced in baptism, is the flesh, with all its sinful lusts. By the flesh we are to understand (according to the general use of that word in scripture) the whole nature of men, both soul and body, in the present unregenerate

unregenerate state; and chiefly that unmortified corruption of soul which dwelleth in every man by nature; which continually lusteth against the spirit, and which is enmity against God—*Rom. viii. 7, 8.* It is this carnal mind which hindereth us from doing good, (*Gal. v. 17.*) and inclines us to do evil—*Rom. vii. 23.* The sinful lusts of the flesh, are inordinate affections, and evil concupiscences of the body and the mind. By these we are inclined to listen to the temptations of the devil, and to abuse the good things of this world, to the base purposes of offending and dishonouring God. 2. The second thing promised at baptism, is, that the baptized person should believe all the articles of the christian faith: That is, all such doctrines as are revealed to us in the holy scriptures, written by the inspiration of God; of which a summary is contained in the Apostles creed. By believing, is here meant a gracious work of the holy spirit of God, whereby the heart of man is enabled fully to assent unto, and firmly to rely upon the word and truth of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ. This faith is indispensably necessary to every saving purpose, and among the unspeakable gifts of God; so that if we are destitute of it, we cannot be happy.

world, with its pomps and vanities.—By the world, is here not meant the frame of created nature, which, as it is the workmanship of the all-perfect God, is, and must be in itself good, though miserably defiled by the sins of its inhabitants. But, by the world we are here to understand those men of the world, (*John* xv. 19.) who are enemies to godliness, and those other creatures in the world, which the devil, the prince of it, uses as snares to seduce men to sin—1. *John* ii. 15—*Matt.* iv. 8, 9. “The pomps and vanities of this “wicked world,” are all those ensnaring objects of riches, pleasures, and honors, including the avidity with which they are pursued; and the intemperate manner in which they are used, by which the wicked are drowned in perdition; of which the Apostle gives a concise, but melancholy detail in 1. *John* ii. 16. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. The third spiritual enemy renounced in baptism, is the flesh, with all its sinful lusts. By the flesh we are to understand (according to the general use of that word in scripture) the whole nature of men, both soul and body, in the present unregenerate

unregenerate state; and chiefly that unmortified corruption of soul which dwelleth in every man by nature; which continually lusteth against the spirit, and which is enmity against God—*Rom. viii. 7, 8.* It is this carnal mind which hindereth us from doing good, (*Gal. v. 17.*) and inclines us to do evil—*Rom. vii. 23.* The sinful lusts of the flesh, are inordinate affections, and evil concupiscences of the body and the mind. By these we are inclined to listen to the temptations of the devil, and to abuse the good things of this world, to the base purposes of offending and dishonoring God. 2. The second thing promised at baptism, is, that the baptized person should believe all the articles of the christian faith: That is, all such doctrines as are revealed to us in the holy scriptures, written by the inspiration of God; of which a summary is contained in the Apostles creed. By believing, is here meant a gracious work of the holy spirit of God, whereby the heart of man is enabled fully to assent unto, and firmly to rely upon the word and truth of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ. This faith is indispensably necessary to every saving purpose, and among the unspeakable gifts of God; so that if we are destitute of it, we cannot be happy.

happy. Without faith it is impossible to please God: "He that believeth on the Son
 " hath everlasting life, and he that believeth
 " not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath
 " of God abideth on him." We are further
 assured, "he that believeth and is baptized
 " shall be saved, but he that believeth not
 " shall be damned"—(*Mark xvi. 16.*) This
 faith in Christ is a lively and active principle,
 and always "worketh by love"—if it does
 not it is only a nominal and dead faith; it is
 the faith of devils, and not of christians; and,
 instead of doing you any service, it will only
 aggravate your guilt, and increase your con-
 demnation. In short, a true faith in Jesus
 Christ, implies a lively and active dependence
 on the Lord Jesus Christ, to receive from him
 wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and re-
 demption. 3. The third thing promised in your
 name at baptism, is, That you should "keep
 " God's holy will and commandments, and
 " walk in the same all the days of your life."
 To this unreserved obedience God has the
 most undeniable claim.—He at first created us,
 has since redeemed us, and does continually
 support and provide for us. What immense
 obligations are these?—How forcibly do they
 bind us to love the Lord our God, and to
 keep

keep his holy will and commandments all the days of our life? Such then is our bounden duty; and yet, alas! where is the man that can truly say that he perfectly discharges the last branch in its full extent? There is none that doeth good, no not one—*Psal.* xiv. 3.

“In many things we offend all; and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”—*Jam.* iii. 2.—

1 *John* i. 8. “All we like sheep have gone astray.” It is impossible for us to be saved

by the tenor of the covenant of works, (*Gal.* ii. 16.) the condition whereof is perfect obedience, (*Rom.* x. 5.) We must, therefore, depend on the covenant of grace, which presents to the eye of faith, the glorious Mediator of that covenant, as the “end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

But though we cannot be saved by our own works, because the best of them are miserably imperfect; yet is our obedience indispensably required for these plain and weighty reasons.

God is hereby glorified; (*Matt.* v. 16.) our neighbor is greatly benefited, and edified; (*1. Pet.* iii. 1, 2.) and our faith is justified; that is, proved to be genuine and true—*Jam.*

ii. 18. Nay, our future reward of grace, will be according to the progress we have made in

the divine life here. He that soweth little, shall reap little; and he that soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully—2. Cor. ix. 6. You may learn, then, from what has been said, the true nature of your baptismal vow. You see now, I hope, the invaluable privileges which are conferred on all that are truly baptized; and the manner in which you must evidence your share in them. The outward sign in baptism you have already received; enquire then, seriously, whether you possess “the inward, and spiritual grace;” which is interpreted by our church, as implying “a death unto sin, and a *new birth* unto righteousness.

It is deeply incumbent on you, to be at a certainty in a matter of so great moment, and with this view, to ask counsel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may not deceive yourselves by resting in the outward form; but that you may be truly regenerate and born again, not of water only, but of the Spirit too.——Without this all religious profession is but hypocrisy and delusion: For, “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature—Gal. vi. 15. If then you are desirous of having your nature, which became
totally

totally corrupt by the fall of Adam, renewed and changed, you must fervently pray unto God for the blessing. This was the practice of the holy psalmist:—"Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." He knew that he was shapen in iniquity, and that in sin his mother had conceived him; he likewise knew, that besides his original depravity, he had been guilty of many actual transgressions, and that, therefore, he was corrupt, and become abominable. Sensible of this, he fervently prays for a clean heart, and a right spirit; and if you wish to obtain these invaluable blessings, you must go, and do likewise. He only who created the heart of man at first, after his own image, can renew it by his spirit in righteousness, and true holiness. This is the work of God, and of God alone. We can no more make ourselves new hearts, than we can create a new world: But if we earnestly and faithfully pray to God for this inestimable blessing, we are sure to receive it.—"Ask," says the Redeemer, "and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you"—*Matt. vii. 7.* Yea, by the mouth of his prophet he makes you this gracious promise: "A new heart

“ will I also give you, and a new spirit will
 “ I put within you”—*Ezek. xxxvi. 26.* And
 he further most expressly assures us, that he
 will give his holy spirit to them that ask him
 —*Luke xi. 13.* When the divine influences
 of this sacred agent are thus received, we shall
 then find, to our unspeakable comfort, that
 old things are passed away, and that all
 things are become new. We shall not only
 find a new nature, and a new heart, but we
 shall likewise experience, by virtue of our
 union with Christ, through faith, all spiritual
 blessings. The veil of ignorance and darkness
 with respect to spiritual things, will then be
 removed from our minds, and Christ will give
 us light ; he will enable us clearly to see the
 purity and holiness of God, the depravity of
 our nature, the sinfulness of our lives, the im-
 perfections of our best services, and conse-
 quently, the indispensable necessity we are
 under (if we hope for salvation) of seeking
 to him, and trusting in him for a better righ-
 teousness than our own.

When thro’ his spirit he has fully convinc-
 ed us of our great unworthiness, and made us
 truly humble, he will then open to us the
 scriptures ; he will shew us that all power is
 given to him in heaven and in earth ; and that
 he

he is mighty to save—*Matt.* xxviii. 18. This is a most undoubted and comfortable truth: For, observe, our Redeemer is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace—*Isa.* ix. 6. How then can they fall short of happiness who have the mighty God on their side? How can they be comfortless who have the everlasting Father for their friend? Or, how can they be destitute of real felicity who have an interest in the Prince of Peace?—It cannot be. As every real christian is a candidate for an immortal crown; and in his way towards the possession of it, is obliged to undergo great difficulties; to deny himself, to take up his cross daily, and follow Christ—*Luke* ix. 22. yet persecution cannot drive him from the path of duty, nor the greatest opposition totally depress him. It is true he may be sometimes afraid, but yet he will put his trust in God. He knows that Christ is the Leader, the great Captain of his salvation; and through the power of his grace he is fully determined to fight manfully under his banner, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to continue his faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end. Such is the mind and will of every real christian; such likewise ought to be

be yours : For you, as well as he, have been baptized, and therefore are under the most solemn obligations so to live and act as becometh the gospel. And can you, *all* of you truly say that you really do so; and that such is your character? You dare not; you know you cannot.—Be not deceived therefore: he that committeth sin, is the servant of sin; and he that is the servant of sin, is the slave of satan, though he may call himself by the name of Christ. If you truly renounce the world, you could not, you would not be so anxious about it, as to neglect the care of your souls. You are commanded *first* to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then you have an express promise that all things necessary either to your present comfort, or future support, shall be added unto you. But alas! too many of you reverse the Saviour's rule, and instead of seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, in the first place, as you ought to do, if you seek it at all, you seek it in the last.—You rise up early, and late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness, not in pursuit after the true riches, but that you may abound in the unrighteous Mammon,

A pru-

A prudent care about your worldly concerns, is undeniably your duty, and without it you cannot live to the divine glory, or be just to yourselves, or others. But this I repeat, and would have you seriously consider it, that your worldly care should be entirely *subordinate* to the love of God, and the care of your immortal souls. But further: In your baptism you renounced not only the devil and all his works, together with the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, but likewise all the sinful lusts of the flesh. If you wish to know what these sinful lusts of the flesh are, they are very plainly enumerated by Saint Paul. The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like—*Gal. v. 19, 20, 21*. And are there not several amongst you who do live in some one, or more of these abominable vices? Let conscience speak, and I fear it will testify loudly against you; and if so, how can you say that you renounce all the sinful lusts of the flesh, whilst you daily and hourly live under the dominion of them?

—What

—What a glaring falshood? What a palpable absurdity is this? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. A tree is known by its fruits. The faith of a true christian has a vital and powerful influence on his life and conversation; it produces a true love both to God and man; so that it is his meat and drink, the very joy and delight of his soul, to promote the glory of God, peace on earth, and good-will towards men—*Luke ii. 14.* And does your faith, my brethren, produce these desirable fruits, these happy effects? If it does, you may then be assured that it is genuine and true; if it does not, it is false and counterfeit; it can avail you nothing; ye are yet in your sins.—Examine yourselves, therefore, whether ye be in the faith—*2. Cor. xiii. 5.*—If you are, happy is your state; if you are not, no words can express your misery. The form of godliness can avail nothing, so long as you are destitute of the power of it. Let no man deceive you with vain words. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature—*2. Cor. v. 17.*

SECTION

SECTION III.

Of PUBLIC WORSHIP.

SINCE the Almighty has been pleased to appoint places for public worship, and has instituted ministers to officiate in them, it is certainly the bounden duty of all his people diligently to attend them. He expressly enjoins you to keep his sabbaths, and to reverence his sanctuary; and, if you neglect to do so, you will hereby bring great guilt upon your own souls—*Lev. xix. 30.* He who will not frequent the house of God, has no reason to expect the divine blessing, but rather to fear his displeasure. It is a heavy charge which God, by the mouth of his prophet Ezekiel, brings against the Jews; and it is equally (or rather more) applicable to all the despisers of christian ordinances: “Ye have despised my holy things, and profaned my sabbaths”—*Ezek. xxii. 8.*—*Mal. iii. 7.* I sincerely wish that this accusation did belong to the Jews only! But alas! it is too evident that it may be justly applied to thousands who now profess the christian religion. They call Christ their Lord and Master; and

D

yet,

yet, they neither do, nor strive to do the things which he has commanded. This observation will hold good in many instances : but it is peculiarly applicable to that shameful neglect of public worship, which prevails among us, and that even on the Lord's own day. If such men will consult the scriptures they will find their conduct condemned in many places, and particularly by the example of our blessed Redeemer, who has left us an example that we should follow his steps—*1. Pet. ii. 21.* For, we are informed by Saint Luke, in the fourth chapter at the sixteenth verse ; He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day ; and he further tells us that he taught daily in the temple—*Luke xix. 47.* You hence see then the zeal of Christ for the public worship of God. This zeal was so fervent, that David, who was a type of Christ, thus speaks concerning it : “ The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up ”—*Psal. lxxix. 9.* And if our Redeemer was so assiduous in attending public worship, and so zealous for the honor of God's house, how can we with the least degree of propriety call ourselves his disciples, whilst we neglect the one, and disregard the other ?

other? If you look into the old testament, you will find (as a pious writer well observes) that in the days of Moses and Joshua, all the people attended *punctually* upon the public reading of the law; and after their decease, heard it from persons duly appointed to perform this sacred office—see *Deut.* xxix. 10. —xxx. 11, 12.—*Josh.* viii. 34, 35. In the time of King David too public worship was held in the same veneration. David speaks in the highest raptures of having gone with the multitude to the house of God.—“As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?—When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me, for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day”—*Psa.* xlv. 1, 4. In the lxxxiv. *Psalms* too the sacred penman expresses his love to public worship, in the most elevated strains. “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of

the Lord : My heart and flesh cry out for the living God.—Blessed are they that dwell in thy house ; they will be still praising thee ; they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion (that is, in the chief place of God's public worship) appeareth before God. One day in thy courts is better than a thousand : I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." From hence (as well as from various other passages in scripture) you may learn that it is the duty of all to attend the public worship of God ; that the divine blessing is *principally* to be expected in God's own house ; and that the *truly* thankful take delight in frequenting his holy temple. You see that these truths evidently appear, even from the writings of the Old Testament : but if you consult the New, you will find, if possible, still stronger proofs of them. It is certain, that the temple of Solomon, (with all its grandeur and magnificence) and the worship there celebrated, were infinitely inferior to christian worship : For, the law, with all its types and ceremonies, had only a shadow of good things to come.—It pointed *invariably to Christ*, and had its completion in him. Christ is the end
of

of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth—*Rom. x. 4.* And if a Jew was inexcusable for neglecting the shadow, how great must be your guilt, how sore your punishment, if you wilfully persist in neglecting christian worship? Christ has appointed a regular succession of ministers till his second coming; and this appointment clearly shews that it is the bounden duty of his people to attend on their ministry. As there can be no preaching without hearing, the very naming of the duty on our part, sets the guilt of your neglect in the strongest light. If a minister be careless and indifferent about the spiritual concerns of his flock, you can, of your own selves, easily perceive the sinfulness of such a character. And do you, can you think that the people can be guiltless who seldom, if ever, attend on the ministers of Jesus Christ? It cannot be. Hear how highly Christ resents the conduct of those who neglect his ministers; that is, (at least in one sense of the word) who neglect to hear them. You may see in *Luke x. 16.*—"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." This is a very applicable passage on the present

sent occasion, and well deserves your most serious consideration. Are not we the ministers of the gospel in the place of those disciples to whom our Lord spoke? Do we not preach to you in the name of Jesus Christ, and as put in authority by him? As long as we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity, so long you are certainly bound to give diligent heed to our preaching: And if you treat any part of our office with flight and contempt, (which you may be said to do in an especial manner, by not coming to hear us) Christ, you see, takes the affront, as offered to God the Father himself. “He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.”

Give me leave, further, to observe, that you have the greatest encouragement given you in the scriptures, to excite you to a due attendance on public worship. This is the gracious promise made us by the Almighty. In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and bless thee—*Ex. xx. 24.* Our Lord, too, has promised to be spiritually present where two or three are gathered together in his name; and his Apostle further assures us, that faith cometh by hearing—*Matt. xviii. 20.—Rom. x. 17.* And if these things

things are so, how ungrateful are we to God, and how cruel to our own souls, if we will not attend to the preaching of God's word, which is the *usual* and *principal* channel of conveying divine knowledge, and a variety of spiritual blessings. Several of you, alas! cannot read, and have rarely any opportunity of hearing the word of God, but from the minister; and will you, dare you trifle with the opportunity?

Some, perhaps, may imagine, that if they remain ignorant of the duty, they shall not be punished for leaving it undone; but let all such remember this undeniable maxim: "that men are always answerable for the omission of duties which they had an opportunity of knowing; and that wilful ignorance is direct and studied disobedience." Others can read, and *pretend* to know their duty as well as the minister can teach them, (as if hearing a sermon were the whole of coming to church, where prayer and praise form the greater part of the service): but I will venture to say that such persons, however they may know their duty, are far, very far from practising it; and consequently stand in need of being reminded by the minister as much as any others.

The

The reasons for non-attendance on public worship are various: Some alledge that they are often indisposed themselves, and cannot attend; or they are obliged to wait upon those that are; or the care of their children confines them at home. Sickness, it is allowed is a hindrance; and an attendance upon the aged, the infirm, the tender, and the helpless, is a branch of those works of mercy, which undoubtedly ought to take place of sacrifice. However, as they have immortal souls which must be taken care of, (as well as their bodies) or be miserable for ever, suffer me to ask, whether such apologists are not sometimes more indulgent to their bodily complaints, and more fearful of getting harm by coming to church, than they ought to be? And, whether a contrivance to assist alternately, in the cares of the family, would not effectually obviate a variety of impediments, which indolence, or want of economy often frame? Where inclination is wanting to a duty, we are all of us too soon furnished with an excuse for not fulfilling it.—We frequently hear other trivial excuses urged for the neglect of public worship: Some absentees plead, that it is so long since they have been at a place of worship, that
shame

shame prevents them from coming, lest their appearance should attract the surprise and attention of their neighbours; others fear, that from the meanness of their cloathing, they should be noticed as objects of contempt or ridicule; and there are not a few, who vainly and presumptuously say, that they are as good as several that do attend, who are no better for it; and that, therefore, they may as well stay away. As to the first excuse—if they have neglected public worship for a long time, just so long have they been *despisers of God's ordinance*; and whether is it better finally to persevere in sin, or to break it off immediately, since “better late than never” is a maxim in no case more important than in that we are considering? I believe it may generally be observed, that many of the poor are kept from church, not so much by *bad clothes* as by *bad hearts*: But as to the pleas of the poor, if, through calamities of any kind; or the demands of a large family, they have no better clothes to put on, I would give this advice: Let them go to church, and let him who dares, *laugh or frown*—God's face will be against that man, in return, when his calamity cometh. He must want even the bowels of a man, much more of a christian, who

E

can

can make sport at the poor, merely for their poverty. And further let me tell them, their shame is of a *false* sort, and seems to arise from a principle of *abominable* pride. Providence (in a sense) has clothed the poor as they are clothed; and ought they to be ashamed of *his* appointment? Certainly not: But if they are reduced in consequence of extravagant and vicious conduct; they have, indeed, the greater reason to be ashamed of it; but none, to neglect the public worship of God. Should any severe, and even ungenerous remarks be made on this account, let them not hesitate to own sin and folly; and by an ingenuous confession, they will probably obtain, instead of reproaches, some charitable relief. As to the apology of those who plead, That they are as good as several that do attend, who are no better for it, and that therefore, they may as well stay away: This method of reasoning is inconsistent, and ridiculous to the last degree; and is a sign of much censoriousness and uncharitableness. It is inconsistent and ridiculous, because the abuse of ordinances by some, is so far from being an argument against the due use of them, that it should rather excite us to greater diligence and circumspection; and the censoriousness
of

of such a plea is exposed and condemned, by that interrogatory :—" Who art thou that judgest? For thou that judgest, doest the " same things." Your business is to make your calling and election sure. They are answerable for abusing the means of grace; and you are left without excuse for neglecting them. Again, if such pleaders suppose that they are to be saved because they are as good as some, and better than some of their neighbours, they are yet, it is to be feared, entire strangers to the first principles of christianity; and appear to be utterly ignorant of God, themselves, and the bible. To his word, therefore, and to his spirit, I heartily refer them, that they may know what they must do to be saved, and not to the *delusive* standard of other people's characters. Further, many make use of the *stale* pretence of not being able to come to church on account of *business*. To all such I would say, Take care that you have to plead *necessary business*, in the *faithful* acceptance of words; for that cannot be called *necessary* business, which would admit of being done on Saturday, or being deferred till Monday.—The breaking in upon Sunday mornings, by late returns from marketing, or traffic of any sort on the preceding day;

and the dedicating a part of the Lord's day, to visiting, pleasure-taking, and travelling, are facts so notorious, and so abandoned, as to prove that they who are guilty of them prefer the temple of Mammon, before the temple of the living God.—Is not this really the case?—Let conscience speak. I fear it is so; and if it be, how great is your guilt—how insupportable will be your punishment, if you shall, in future, thus *daringly* trample on that divine law, which enjoins you so to remember the sabbath day, as to keep it holy! Whenever you are tempted, therefore, to absent yourselves from public worship, look well to it that your excuse for not attending, be such as you need not blush to offer before the judgment-seat of Christ. This consideration may serve as a general touch-stone, to prove every sort of excuse that can be urged; and will help to shew the futility and weakness of all of them, except those which arise from sickness, or from works of indispensable necessity and charity.

I am thoroughly aware, that multitudes attend church regularly, without attaining the end—I am sorry to have reason also to add, that the *reliance* upon *forms* and *mere attendance*, is the general mistake of the age in which

which we live. I will venture, however, to affirm, that though a person professing christianity, may attend church as punctually as the bell tolls, and not be a christian at last; it is impossible that he should be a real christian, who habitually (without just cause) neglects public worship. Indeed, public worship is not only of Divine institution, but an attendance upon it is enjoined by the sanction of public authority. You cannot, therefore, be a good subject any more than a good christian, when you continue to attend it but seldom. For, while you are setting the laws of heaven at defiance, you are also treating the laws of your country with the like contempt; But I address you as a minister, not as a magistrate; and therefore only drop this as a hint of *secondary* importance. I can truly say, that it gives me the greatest concern to observe how apparently careless and negligent many are, considering the number of those who attend, and those who do not. I suppose there are, at least, three thousand souls in this parish;* and yet, alas! generally on Sundays, (in the morning) I believe, the congregation does not consist of more than four or five hundred,

* Of Nantwich.

and

and frequently of a much less number.—
 This is a vast, a most shocking disproportion,
 and it strikes me as a fact truly lamentable.
 May all, who by their wilful and criminal
 negligence, give occasion for this remark,
 be brought by the grace of God seriously to
 consider their duty and interest; their guilt
 and danger in future! Then, instead of ne-
 glecting the duties of the church, they will
 be very diligent in attending upon them:—
 They will, “as new-born babes, desire the
 “sincere milk of the word, that they may
 “grow thereby;” and will be truly glad,
 when summoned, to go into the house of
 the Lord—1. *Pet.* ii. 2.—*Psa.* cxxii. 1. This
 is our duty at all times, and more especially
 on the Sabbath day; which we are com-
 manded by God so to remember, as to keep
 it holy. To this end be persuaded to set your
 worldly concerns in order over night, and
 firmly resolve not to exercise your respective
 callings, on this sacred day, unless indispensable
 necessity, or charity, should oblige you to it.
 If you will offend in this respect, you are lia-
 ble to the penalties of the civil law, which
 may, and ought to be inflicted upon you for
 wilful disobedience. But alas! what are the
 severest of human penalties, in comparison
 with

with the terrors of the Lord, and those dreadful punishments which are threatened in the word of God against obstinate and impenitent sinners? To avoid this impending danger, do you, as soon as you awake, remember that it is the Sabbath, and that it must be sanctified, or kept holy to the Lord. Endeavour by prayer, by reading the scriptures, and meditating upon them, to disengage your affections from all worldly matters, and to fix them on things above.

When the duties of the closet have been performed, I then entreat all, who have families, to call them together for the exercise of family-worship. After this, be particularly careful not to absent yourselves from the public worship of God; but piously resolve to attend at church *both parts of the day*; join with the congregation in every thing required by the rubric, and earnestly endeavour in all respects, to promote the divine glory.——

When you are returned from the solemn assembly, you must not imagine that you are at liberty to spend the rest of the day according to your own humour. In *Isaiab lvi* you are enjoined “not to do your own ways; not to find your own pleasure; not to speak your own words on God’s holy day.”——

Observe

Observe attentively this passage—you are not to do your own ways; that is, you are not to follow your secular or worldly employments. You are not to find your own pleasure; that is, you are not to use recreations, and sports upon it. You are not to take unnecessary journeys, for worldly purposes. You are not to pay or receive *needless* visits. You are not to consume it in indolence, or in frequenting public houses, which are too frequently nurseries of vice and immorality. You are not to speak your own words on God's holy day; that is, you are not to discourse on worldly subjects. You are not to consume it in foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient, but rather you should employ it in speaking on religious topics, which may edify, and minister grace unto the hearers—*Eph. v. 4—iv. 29*. You see, plainly then, from this text, that it is your bounden duty to employ the intervals on the Sabbath day, (as much as possible) in spiritual exercises. If you have no families, you may fill them up by private prayer, and reading the scriptures; if you have families, by catechizing your children and servants, by reminding them of what they heard at church; by reading the scriptures; by disc-

coursing

courting with them on spiritual subjects, by singing of psalms, and by joining with them in family-worship. To induce you thus *strictly* to observe the sabbath, consider that your good and gracious God has given you *six* Days in every Week, for the management of your secular concerns; and has set apart but this *one* for himself. To rob him of this, is therefore, the highest ingratitude; and a dreadful kind of sacrilege, which he will severely punish. This we may learn from *Numb. xv.* in which we find that a sabbath-breaker was stoned to death, by the express command of God himself. This is a fact which requires no comment; it speaks plainly and awfully to high and low, rich and poor: God grant that you may all deeply consider it! To induce you to do so, remember that God has promised a blessing to him who duly observes the sabbath day.—Blessed is the man that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil—*Isaiah lvi. 2:* If then we would either avoid the judgments of God, or hope for his blessing, we must be careful to sanctify his own day, and make it truly a religious rest.

Consider seriously these *plain*, but *important* truths, and then I trust that they will, thro'

F

the

the grace of God, have a proper influence on your future conduct.—It is your undoubted duty to be diligent, earnest, and zealous, in the performance of all religious offices : For, God has commanded you to be so ; and if you do not conscientiously use the means, you cannot reasonably hope to obtain the ends intended by them. I must here subjoin one caution :—Use the means of grace *diligently* but take good heed that you do not *abuse* them ; that is, you must not *rest* in them, nor *trust* in them, as *meritorious*, or available in the least to your eternal salvation.—No, you must trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, (who is the Lord our Righteousness) and not in yourselves, or in your religious duties ; for the best of them are attended with very great imperfections, and are acceptable only unto God through him. When we have done all ; when we have exerted every faculty and power in the cause of religion, (and who is there that can truly say this ?) we are but *unprofitable* servants ; and if *unprofitable*, we can claim nothing on our own account, but must be saved *wholly* by grace, through faith. In short, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord—*Rom. vi. 23.*

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Of PRIVATE WORSHIP.

THE light of nature is become so greatly obscured by the fall, that it is utterly incapable of directing men to the knowledge of the true God, and consequently insufficient to lead them to true happiness. This will evidently appear if we either take a short view of Pagan history, or attend to the express declarations of Divine Revelation.— Athens was the seat of learning and politeness in the Apostle's time ; and yet even here they had erected an altar *To the unknown God*.— Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools : They changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to the corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. In short, they worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, amen.— For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections—*Rom. i. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26*. Such was the state of the Heathen world before the manifestation of Jesus Christ in the flesh.— What an inestimable blessing then is the

F 2

gospel,

gospel, by which we are brought out of darkness unto marvelous light ! Indeed we are all by nature born like the wild ass's colt : That is, ignorant and stupid, self-willed and untractable, with respect to spiritual things. We are sometimes darkness, but now (if real christians) we are light in the Lord. Let it be our great care then to walk as children of the light, and to be truly thankful for those innumerable mercies which we daily and hourly receive at the hands of God. In him we live, and move, and have our being ; every blessing we enjoy, every comfort in life cometh down from above, and is the free and unmerited effect of his paternal care. Yea, He giveth us all things richly to enjoy, and showers down his mercies and favors upon us ; He crowneth the year with goodness, and his clouds drop fatness. These temporal blessings call aloud upon us for a tribute of a grateful heart, and should induce us frequently to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men : But above all are we bound to praise him for the inestimable blessing of redemption, by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ.

The

The work of redemption as much exceeds in value all temporal blessings, as the worth of an immortal soul does that of a mortal body. Whether we consider, therefore, the temporal or the spiritual mercies we receive, we are *in duty and gratitude* obligated to praise God for them, as unmerited gifts; and to acknowledge our dependence on him for the continuance thereof, by humble and frequent applications to the throne of grace. The scriptures are express in urging the necessity of such acknowledgments, both of prayer and praise; the former of which duties, in particular, is strongly recommended by the example of our blessed Lord himself. *St. Mark* informs us that our Lord in the morning rising up a great while before day, went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed—*Mark* i. 35. *St. Matthew* tells us, that when Christ had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: And when the evening was come he was there alone—*Matt.* xiv. 23. And that this was our Saviour's usual practice you may learn from *Luke* xxii. 39, compared with Chap. xxi. 37. If therefore we reverence the precepts and example of our Redeemer, we shall esteem ourselves bound to compliance,
by

by a double sanction, which enhances the importance of prayer, considered in the light either of a duty, or a privilege. The essence of prayer consists in lifting up the heart to God; or in other words, in laying before him all our wants and desires; from whence it follows, that an humble and deep sense of our own sinfulness and weakness, is *absolutely* necessary to a due discharge of this duty.—The poor and needy will only stoop to ask relief; and, if so, a sensibility of our real want, is a necessary preparative to our invocation of the Almighty for help. They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. We shall never seek after Christ in earnest, till we are fully convinced *of our guilt and danger*; and that we must perish without him. But when once the spirit of God has deeply convinced you of sin, the most unlearned and the most moral, will cry earnestly and mightily unto the Lord for help.—Then the principal impediments to the exercise of fervent prayer will be removed, and you will *never be satisfied*, till you *obtain* an interest in Jesus Christ, and then, and not till then, you will find rest unto your souls.

We have before hinted, that prayer to the real christian is not only an indispensable duty,
but

but likewise a most happy and delightful privilege. The true believer, while humbled under a sense of his unworthiness, and innumerable imperfections, can yet approach unto God as his God, and reconciled Father in Christ, with a firm hope of acceptance and success. Confiding in the all-sufficient righteousness and blood of his Redeemer, he goes unto the throne of grace, and in his name he boldly asks, and confidently expects a full supply for all his wants; he considers himself as acceptable in the Son of God; as complete in him; and that God, who spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, will, for his sake, freely bestow upon his people, all things that be needful both for life and godliness. Convinced of this, he spreads all his wishes, and all his wants before his heavenly Father. He asks for temporal blessings with an entire resignation to the will of God: but with respect to spiritual privileges, he is earnest, and importunate. Thus does the kingdom of heaven suffer violence, and the violent, that is, zealous christians, who are truly earnest, do (as it were) take it by the force and vehemence of their prayers.— They daily ask, that as they grow in years they may grow in grace too, and in the knowledge

knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—They pray fervently for an increase of faith in Christ, for more dependence upon his name, for a full and free pardon of all their sins through his blood; for mortification of their corrupt affections through the mighty power of his Spirit; that the same mind may be in them which was also in Christ Jesus, and that they may be more and more conformed to his spotless image and example.—Thus they hunger and thirst after righteousness; and blessed are they that do truly hunger and thirst after it, for they have the express promise of their Redeemer on their side, that they shall be filled: They shall be filled with all joy and peace in believing in this world, and in the next, with those pure and exalted pleasures, which are at God's right hand for evermore.

If you wish to partake of this happy state, you must pray daily, and continue instant in prayer. Besides, prayer is *absolutely* necessary to the support of spiritual life; so necessary, that you may as well support natural life without daily bread, as spiritual life without prayer.—Archbishop Sharp observes, that prayer is to our soul, what meat and drink are to our bodies; that is, their repast, their support,

support their nourishment. Prayer is the great universal instrument by which we bring down blessings from above ; it is a grand means of our defence and preservation against sin, and against temptation. It is the guardian of our graces, and a principal means of advancing them. Prayer is the wings of our souls, whereby we raise ourselves above this lower world to God above ; and with whom while we therein converse, we become more and more transformed into his nature. Whatever applications of heaven there be here upon earth ; whatever foretastes we christians have in these bodies of the happiness of eternity, they are all brought about by the means of prayer, [See Arch-bishop Sharp's sermons, vol. iv. p. 30.] Now, *prayer may be divided into three kinds*, occasional, stated, and ejaculatory. By occasional prayer I mean an earnest address to God for relief when under the pressure of any sickness or affliction, or for direction in doubtful or intricate concerns.

By stated prayer, I understand a due and regular application (at least each morning and evening) to the Giver of all good, for a supply of all spiritual and temporal blessings ; and by ejaculatory prayer is intended the offering up mental addresses at the throne of

G

grace,

grace, according to our various circumstances, and in the midst of our secular business.—Indeed, if we are duly sensible of our spiritual wants, and have a true love for Christ, it will be the delight and daily employment of our souls to pray without ceasing; that is, to be continually in a praying frame and disposition of mind, and on every occasion, we shall let our requests be made known unto God in the name of Jesus Christ.—Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also: If therefore, you have a true love for God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, it will be the very joy of your heart to converse with your God and Saviour in earnest and fervent prayer. Far from esteeming it an irksome duty, you will take pleasure in offering up your petitions to the Almighty, who is styled in scripture a God hearing prayer: He is always more ready to hear than we to pray; and is wont to give more than either we desire or deserve.

Prayer in a methodical form of devotion, consists of five parts. I. Invocation—This implies the belief of the Deity, and an acknowledgment of his infinite goodness and divine perfections.

II. Confession of our sin, both original and actual—In this we acknowledge our vileness and

unworthiness in the sight of God, and own that we deserve punishment, both temporal and eternal, which is due to transgressors.

III. *Petition or supplication for pardon, and for a supply of all temporal and spiritual benefits*—This arises from our faith in the infinite mercies of God, and the comfortable assurances which he has given us of pardon and acceptance through Jesus Christ, whenever we repent, and believe the gospel.

IV. *Thanksgiving* for the spiritual and temporal mercies which we daily and hourly receive—We are enjoined expressly to offer unto God thanksgiving, and if we do so, from the heart, we shall certainly experience that it is, indeed, a joyful and pleasant thing to be thankful.

V. *Intercession*, or the asking a full supply of spiritual or temporal blessings for our brethren—This is our undoubted duty, and a noble exercise of christian charity.—This is a branch of charity which the poorest may exercise, and by which they may become instrumental in procuring inestimable blessings, not only for their relations, friends, and neighbours, but likewise for their enemies too. Indeed, this is a means of promoting the happiness of others, and of filling our own hearts with joy
and

and gladness when we shall behold the success of our prayers in their behalf.

These are the different parts of stated prayer, besides which it is needful and proper to present a short address to the Almighty, before we sit down to meat. We find that our Redeemer looked up to heaven, and blessed the loaves and fishes before he gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude—*Mar. vi. 41.* And St. Paul, though a prisoner, and in the presence of heathens, would not omit this necessary duty : He took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all, and when he had broken it he began to eat—*Acts xxvii. 35.* God has graciously given us the good things of life to be used with moderation, and received with thanksgiving ; be careful, therefore, to observe the Apostle's rule.—
Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God. Then will your persons and performances be accepted in Jesus Christ, the beloved Son of God, and all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in his name in prayer, believing, ye shall receive—*Matt. xxi. 22.*

SECTION

SECTION V.

Of FAMILY-WORSHIP.

FAMILY-PRAYER is a duty of great importance, and all parents, masters, and mistresses are indispensably obliged to take care that it be regularly and duly performed. They who live in a wilful and habitual neglect of it, shew plainly that they have no real sense of religion upon their minds, and must expect to be strictly accountable for such a criminal and shameful omission. The late celebrated Arch-bishop Tillotson has in his sermon concerning family-religion, this remarkable passage. After speaking of the necessity of setting up the constant worship of God in our families, by daily prayers to God every morning and evening, and by reading some portion of the holy scriptures at those times, especially out of the psalms of David, and the new testament, he then adds, " This " is so necessary to keep alive and to maintain " a sense of God and religion in the minds of " men, that where it is neglected, I do not " see how any family can in reason be esteem- " ed a family of christians, or indeed to have " any

“ any religion at all.” I most sincerely wish that all who live in an habitual neglect of family-duties, would seriously consider the propriety and force of the above observation; if they did they would certainly be brought, by the grace of God, to alter their conduct, and assemble their families each morning and evening, for the worship of their great and good Creator. God, in the course of his wise providence, has committed the care and charge of the souls of your children and servants to you, who are their parents, masters, and mistresses; it is your undoubted duty, therefore, to set them a good example; to pray for them and with them; to instruct, or, if unable to do so, to procure instruction for them in the principles of the christian religion, and to read, or cause to be read to them the holy scriptures. To this you are *indispensably* obliged, by the express command of Almighty God. Hear what a solemn injunction He gives you to this purpose: These words that I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up—*Deut. vi. 6, 7.* You hence plainly

plainly see what the Almighty requires of you with respect to the religious instructions of your families; may you all earnestly pray for grace, and diligently pray for this injunction. Then will you be happy in yourselves, and a blessing to all your dependents: but if they live in ignorance and vice, and die in sin through your neglect, great will be your guilt, and dreadful your punishment. Indeed, if you had no love for God, for yourselves, or for your families, yet you ought certainly to maintain family-religion in your houses, if you have any regard for the comforts and blessings of this life. You are told expressly that the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; and the Prophet invokes the Almighty to pour out his indignation upon the families that have not called upon his name. And if such heavy wrath and dreadful indignation are threatened to all the neglecters and despisers of family-worship, how highly does it behove them to repent of their shameful negligence, and immediately to set up the worship of God in their houses.—Indeed, without we do so we have no reason to expect either dutiful children, or honest servants: We have no room to hope for the divine blessing in this world, or happiness in
the

the next. If we live in an habitual neglect of this duty, how can we expect the blessing of God? How can we expect that our affairs should prosper when we do not even pray for a blessing upon our endeavours? It cannot reasonably be. Them that honor God, He will honor; and they that despise Him shall be lightly esteemed. But, if we duly worship God, in, and with our families, we have the greatest reason to expect a supply of all family-blessings. Christ has promised that if two of you shall agree to ask any thing of God, in his name, it shall be granted; and has further assured you, that where even two or three meet together in his name, that he will be in the midst of them. What great encouragement is here afforded us, to call our families together for the purposes of religious worship, and to hope for a supply of every thing that is truly good for us! The judicious Mr. Burkit has well observed, that every parent and master of a family, may be considered as a Prophet, Priest, and King to his household. As a Prophet, he ought to teach them by his instruction and example; as a Priest, he is to offer up the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise for them; and as a King, he is to enjoin and command his children, and his household after him,

him, to keep the way of the Lord. Thus did faithful Abraham, for which pious practices God himself expresses the greatest confidence in him. I know him, says the Almighty, that he will command his children, and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. Devout Joshua was fully resolved that he, and his house, would serve the Lord.—And Cornelius too, the pious centurion, stands upon record for his family-religion.—It is said of him that he feared the Lord, and all his house; that is, he revered and worshipped the Supreme Being, and taught and excited his dependents to do the same. May you all be so wise as diligently to follow the pious examples of these faithful servants of the living God! and if you do so, under the guidance of God's grace, and in a true spirit of humility and faith of sincerity and godly love, great will be your spiritual (and probably too your temporal) comfort here, and unspeakable will be your bliss hereafter. Indeed, the great advantages that will attend this christian practice, are altogether sufficient to engage us duly to observe it. If you believe that God is infinite in power; that it is he who killeth and maketh alive; that bringeth down to the

H

grave,

grave and raiseth up again, and that against him there is no wisdom, nor counsel, nor understanding—1. *Sam.* ii. 6.—*Prov.* xxi. 1. You must be clearly convinced that he cannot want ability to answer your petitions. If there remains any scruple, therefore, it must relate to his will, but even of this you have not the least doubt, because his truth is engaged to you for his readiness to do you good. If you ask as you ought, in faith and humility, with earnestness and perseverance, you shall certainly receive. All things whatsoever he shall ask in prayer, believing, he shall receive—*Matt.* xxi. 22.

Agreeable to the gracious promises which we meet with in scripture, respecting the success of prayer, we find many instances of the great regard God has been pleased to shew to his faithful servants. Thus the prayer of Joshua stopped the sun in its course; and when Elias prayed earnestly that it might not rain, it rained not upon the earth for the space of three years and six months: but upon his asking the contrary, the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit—*Jam.* v. 17, 18. You hence learn that prayer has a kind of omnipotency in it. Indeed, the duty of prayer is of unspeakable advantage to the

the sons of men; it opens the treasury of heavenly favors, and makes way for them to descend on all faithful christians. It is the most beneficial, honorable, and happy of all employments. It is so beneficial, that when duly performed, it obtains from the bounteous Giver of all good, a comfortable supply of the good things of this life, together with a full supply of all needful spiritual blessings: It is so honorable, that we are hereby admitted into the more immediate presence of the King of Kings, and have fellowship and communion with the Father of spirits: And when once you have experienced this divine intercourse between God and your own souls, you will then no longer think that prayer is an irksome and tedious duty, but will be ready to own that it is a most blessed and happy privilege: You will experience such solid joy, and heart-felt satisfaction, as carnal professors know nothing of; and even the regenerate can much better feel than express. In short, you will experience, and be filled with the peace of God which passeth all understanding, a peace which this vain world can neither give nor take away.

The chief design of prayer, is, that we may procure the grace of God—to subdue our

corrupt affections, and to enable us to live in this evil world, as candidates for a better.—If it produce not these effects, it is only a lip-labour—a specious self-deceit. This observation is added by way of caution, that you may not fatally mistake (as too many do) the form of religion for the power thereof. Examine carefully, therefore, into the state of your own souls——prove your own selves. See whether your attendance on the means of grace, produces a change from nature to grace, and a renewal in the spirit of your minds.—Are you deeply convinced both of your original and actual guilt? Have you fled to the cross for refuge? Are you born again? Are you become new creatures? Is your faith genuine and lively? Does it work by love, and enable you to bring forth the good fruits of the spirit? Does it overcome the world, and produce in you a life of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness? If such be your character, your attendance on ordinances has had the desired effect; you are turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan unto God.—You have an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore you shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life. Happy, unspeakably happy are the people

people who have the Lord for their God.—Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for you all, is, that you may be admitted into this happy state. To attain this desirable end, you must resolve, by the grace of God, to be very diligent in the use of all the means of grace; especially be persuaded to continue instant in prayer. It is impossible for you to enjoy any comfortable sense of the favor of God, without the exercise of daily and habitual prayer. The more you are found in the exercise of this great duty, whether in public, private, or in your families, the more grace will you receive from God, and the greater will be your comfort and peace. It is greatly to be lamented that this important duty should be so much neglected in general, and especially that important branch of it concerning which I have been treating, namely, family-prayer.

The world in which we live, is very depraved, and we are daily surrounded with various temptations and dangers, which we can neither foresee nor prevent.—These considerations may well suggest to us the necessity of imploring the grace, protection, and blessing of God before we go abroad; and will also afford a very strong argument for our joint petitions

petitions as a family, that we may obtain a fresh supply both of temporal and spiritual, of personal and social blessings. Indeed, religion should be regarded in our families, as the chief and greatest of all concerns; for, if our spiritual interest be finally neglected, we must be miserable for ever. Take care, therefore, to begin and end each day with God.—Remember too that your own salvation is very nearly concerned in the care and neglect of the souls of your dependents. God, in the course of his providence has committed the care of *families unto the heads thereof*; and if any of them should be lost by *their* negligence or carelessness, their blood will be required at *such persons'* hands.

The care of souls is a most weighty and important care, and the neglect of them incurs the most dreadful of all guilt. It highly behoves all the heads of families, therefore, seriously to consider this, diligently to pray for grace, and be active in family-duties, lest they fall into the heaviest condemnation. It is by no means sufficient that householders regard their own spiritual concerns only: No; if Christ reigns in our own hearts, we shall be sure to labour diligently, and pray fervently, that our families may know him too. If

we

we act otherwise, we are assuredly hypocrites, and not true believers. If we are true christians, the love which we bear to our own souls, will be extended to a concern for theirs ; for it is impossible that sincere christians should be indifferent about the spiritual concerns of any of their dependents. If then you have any regard to the commands of God, any love for your own souls, or the souls of your domestics, whether children or servants, I entreat you to take proper care that the morning and evening sacrifice of solemn prayer be daily offered up in your families. You have many family-sins to be confessed, many family-wants to be relieved, and many mercies and blessings which ought to be acknowledged.—Some may be ready to say that they have no time for this devout exercise. What ! have you no time for the service of God ? Remember who it is that gives you all your time ! Is it not your great and good Creator ? Certainly it is. And why does he give it you ? Is it that you may eat and drink, and labour for the meat which perisheth ? No ; He gives you day after day, and year after year, that whether you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, you may do all to his glory ; and that you may give all diligence to make your calling

ing

ing and election sure. Earnestly seek from God an heart duly prepared for this great duty, and I will then venture to assure you that you will not want time for the discharge of it. For, you will then be disposed to abridge yourselves in the seasons of eating and sleeping, rather than be deprived of an opportunity for family-worship. Do not pretend that business will not give you leave to do this. Remember, that the salvation of your own soul, and the souls committed to your charge, is the greatest and most important of all business. The blessing of our understandings is to be sought for and obtained by prayer, and without the divine blessing nothing can prosper. We may rise up early, and late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness, but we shall assuredly find, that "except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it; "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Some may be ready to say, that through want of education they are not able to pray with their families. To such I answer: Seek for ability and power from God. Use the one talent faithfully, and remember, to your comfort, that God will certainly give you an happy increase—*Matt. xxv. 24.* If you can read you may easily find helps

helps for the discharge of this necessary duty, if you cannot, you ought to join with others, and you may assure yourselves that God has great regard to the joint prayers of his faithful servants*—*Acts xii. 5, 10, 12.* Ask therefore, and it shall be given you; seek, and

* I have a pleasing hope, that several of you, my brethren, have long since formed and practised Joshua's resolution in *Josh. xxiv. 15*: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. While vanity laughs aloud, and impiety gives vent to its horrid platphenies, in families around you, the voice of spiritual rejoicing is heard in your dwellings—*Psal. cxviii. 13.* I congratulate you, my dear brethren, and hope your families will be nurseries for religion in future times, and educate many for the heavenly state: It were to be wished that all made conscience of this matter: But alas! my friends, though I do not affect to be a spy in your families, yet I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest some of you habitually neglect this very important duty: While family-religion is owned to be obligatory on christians of all denominations, if they would act consistently with their own principles: Yet, are there not many in this assembly, who live without family-religion in their houses? Conscience can, and will find out the guilty, and therefore, I need say no more. This neglect discovers such a stupid indifferency about religion, or so inveterate an aversion to it, as is truly lamentable. All that the ministers of the gospel can do, is to endeavour to convince the understandings first; and then to persuade, to exhort, to invite, to threaten, and after all to pity and pray for the neglecters or despisers of family-religion, to that God who alone can open their eyes, and turn their hearts. God grant that all who make light of this weighty matter, may very soon clearly see their error, truly repent of it, and actually forsake it. Then there is no doubt but that God will, for Christ's sake, pardon their former negligence, receive them graciously, and reward them bountifully.

ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For, every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened—*Matt. vii. 7, 8.* Having, therefore, this gracious promise, let us all resolve with devout Joshua, that we and our houses will serve the Lord; and in consequence of this pious resolution, let us all, each morning and evening, both separately, and in and with our families, come boldly unto the throne of grace, in the name of the ever-blessed Jesus, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need—*Heb. iv. 16.*

SECTION

SECTION VI.

Of CATECHISING CHILDREN *and* SERVANTS.

THE duty of parents towards their children, obliges them to pay a due regard both to their spiritual and temporal interests. — The tie of natural affection is generally so strong, that little seems necessary to be said to convince them of the latter of these duties ; Most parents are sufficiently attentive to the temporal advantage of their families : but alas ! there are few (comparatively very few) who pay a proper attention to their spiritual improvement. To awaken such to a sense of duty, the Apostle enjoins all parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; that is, to instruct and admonish them ; to educate them in the love, fear, and knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent ; or in other words, to ground them early, and establish them firmly in the principles of the christian religion. That you may be induced to practise this important precept, I promise to consider, 1st, The indispensable necessity you all are under, to give your children a christian education.

cation. 2dly, To remind you of the great advantages which will arise, both to yourselves, to them, and to the public, in consequence of so doing. 1st, Let us consider the indispensable necessity you are all under, to give your children a christian education.— This obligation arises from the depravity of their nature, from the ties of natural affection, and from the commands of God. Man, as we are told in scripture, (*Job xi. 12.*) is born like a wild ass's colt; that is, he is naturally dull and foolish, ignorant and untractable, with respect to spiritual things: His understanding is dark; his will perverse, his affections misplaced; his heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; he is by nature a child of wrath, and miserably prone to all evil. Whilst we view our offspring in this deplorable and dangerous situation, we must certainly be devoid of all the ties of natural affection, and even of common humanity too, if we do not endeavour to administer to their spiritual wants: To this end we should be careful to have them admitted by baptism into the fellowship of Christ's religion. This holy ordinance was appointed by our Saviour Christ, as the regular way of admission

mission into his church. In a few years their reason will begin to dawn, and then we must endeavour, by degrees, to instruct them in every point of duty to God, their neighbours, and themselves. The earlier we enter on this important business, the better; it ought to be begun on the first appearance of reason and understanding. Whom, says the Prophet, shall he teach knowledge? Whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts: For, precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little—*Isa.* xxviii. 9, 10. Indeed, the laws of God do strictly enjoin all parents diligently to discharge this great duty.—The Almighty, speaking of the laws which he had given to the Israelites, says, Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.—Train up a child, says Solomon, in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

When children are duly instructed in the principles of true religion, in their tender years,

years, they seldom, if ever afterwards, entirely lose the benefit of it; and this is surely a strong reason why parents should be attentive to this great concern. Man is born with a most unhappy propensity to evil, and therefore it is indispensably necessary to endeavour to inculcate betimes a serious sense of religion, with a view to counteract and restrain the corruption of our nature. The grace of God alone can effectually do this, and therefore we should be very earnest in prayer to God, for a plentiful supply of his holy spirit, both for ourselves and for our children, and should seriously remind them to do the same.—— Whilst they are destitute of grace, they can neither be, nor continue christians; they can never be happy either in this world, or the next. This is a point of the utmost consequence, and therefore highly necessary to be inculcated.

Having now proved, from a consideration of the depravity of human nature, and the express commands of God, that it is incumbent on all parents to give their children a christian education. I proceed 2dly, To remind you of the great advantages which will arise both to yourselves, to them, and to the public, in consequence of so doing. Indeed, the

the future felicity or sorrow of parents, depends on no one circumstance more than on the good or bad education of their children.—

This consideration will induce them, if they regard their own happiness, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

A dutiful child is one of the greatest blessings which a parent can experience: He is a prop to his drooping age, and a sure comforter under every distress; his filial tenderness will soothe every pain, and amply repay our former care. On the contrary, it is a matter of great concern to tender parents to see the misconduct of their children, but it is greatly increased when they are sensible that it is in any measure owing to their own negligence, and inattention. Such a reflection must strike deep in the mind of every thinking parent, and will add greatly to the weight of his other afflictions. So that it is the interest of parents to give their children religious education, and is certainly a great blessing to the children themselves. The advantages of an early piety are many and great. If we remember our creator in the days of our youth, we shall lay the surest foundation for true comfort, both here and hereafter. Hereby the glory of God will be most promoted, and our own happiness

ness best secured. The glory of God is a point in which all our actions ought to centre.—— To this end were we born; for this cause were we redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God, that we may live to the Divine glory. The glory of God is most advanced by paying obedience to his laws, and therefore they who begin soonest to walk in the way of God's commandments, do certainly act most to his glory. They have an opportunity of making a far greater progress in religious duties, and consequently of bringing more glory to God, and more honour to their christian profession. Indeed, as early piety redounds most to the honour of God, so will it bring likewise, most honour to ourselves: Those that honour God, God will honour. It is remarked, therefore, in scripture, to the praise of Obadiah, that he served the Lord from his youth. Samuel is said, when young, to have stood before God in a linen ephod; Timothy, from a child, to have known the holy scriptures. These things are recorded much to the honor of these young saints; and it should encourage others early to seek the Lord. In proportion to our present growth in grace, will be our future reward:—We may reasonably conclude, therefore, that they who re-
member

member their Creator in the days of their youth, and do, through the grace of God, persevere in a christian course, will assuredly be distinguished by considerable degrees of glory; nor is the happiness of an early acquaintance with God confined to the other world, but has a promise likewise of much inward comfort and satisfaction at present.— Every true christian experiences this; he is filled with all joy and peace in believing; nay, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It may be truly said, therefore, that the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasauntness, and that all her paths are peace. Indeed, the Apostle expressly assures us, that godliness is profitable for all things; it has the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come. There is no solid happiness to be obtained in this life, but what arises from the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. If we have this most desirable of all knowledge, let what will happen we cannot be miserable.— For, the Lord God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him. He has an interest in the Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace, and therefore whether he is high or low, rich or

K

poor,

poor, still he magnifies the Lord his God, and his spirit rejoices in God his Saviour. We hence learn, that the true happiness both of parents and children, is greatly promoted by a religious education ; and I beg leave to observe further, that the interest of the public is greatly concerned in it ; hereby men are disposed, through the grace of God, to be honest and faithful, active and diligent, in their respective stations. A true christian is an impartial judge, an upright magistrate, a faithful pastor, an affectionate husband, a tender father, a sincere friend, a kind neighbor, and peaceable member of society. So far as he conscientiously discharges the relative and social duties, so far he is a real christian, and no further. What an exalted, what an holy character is a true christian ? And how much is the interest of society concerned in the promotion of vital christianity ? This, and this alone can promote inward comfort, and make men useful members of the community to which they belong. As a christian education is necessary for your children, because the numerous advantages accruing from it to parents, to children themselves, and to the public ; I shall now further observe, that it is equally needful for your servants :—They, though

though depraved by nature, are possessed of precious and immortal souls; were redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God; and are placed by providence under the direction and controul of their masters, whose duty it is to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If they are incapable of instructing them properly themselves, (which is too often the case) they should, however, take care to bring them regularly to attend public-worship, and assist them in recollecting and applying the doctrines delivered at such seasons, to their edification. For, if we suffer them to remain ignorant of christian principles, and regardless of christian duties, our guilt and misery will be great in proportion to our negligence. To avoid these dreadful consequences, let it be your great care to instruct the several members of your family in the principles of true religion. To facilitate this great business, our church has provided a short catechism or instruction to be learned of every person before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop. In this catechism all things are contained that a christian ought to know and believe, to his soul's health; and the church has enjoined all parents, masters, and teachers in public schools

to bring children, servants, apprentices, and pupils to the church, at the time appointed, in order that they might there be instructed in the church-catechism, by the officiating minister. How seasonable and necessary this injunction is, our woeful experience may sufficiently convince us, when we reflect on the gross ignorance and irreligion of persons in those places especially, where catechism is neglected! They have very little knowledge of their duty, and less inclination to its practice; the mind is tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; is in continual danger of receiving the most destructive opinions, and of falling into the most flagrant crimes. To remove this deplorable ignorance, and to prevent the dismal consequences of it among the flock committed to my care, I prepared, and have for several years past, delivered annually a course of practical lectures on the church-catechism. In these lectures are introduced the answers contained in Mr. Lewis's excellent exposition,* together with various passages from

* Mr. Lewis was minister of Margate, in Kent, and his Exposition of the Church-catechism, is the most plain, concise, and intelligible of any that I know—it clearly points out the scripture-proofs of the confirmation and establishment of every point of christian doctrine, for which reasons I have given

from the writings of our most eminent divines.

During the course of the first year, I had the satisfaction to see that these lectures were attended by many children, and likewise by a considerable number of many adult parishioners: But alas! when the novelty of this undertaking was over, the generality began to fail in their attendance. I cannot reflect on this your remissness without great concern. If you had a real and true sense of religion at heart, you would lay aside all excuses, and you would gladly and joyfully embrace every opportunity of hearing the word of God.—You could not, nay, you would not be diverted from this important business, by any of the fashionable and trifling amusements of this dissipated age.—Remember that the truths contained in these lectures are of the

given it the preference. This small book is divided into twelve Sections, one of which may be easily learned in the compass of ten days or a fortnight, even by children of slow capacities, without neglecting the other branches of their education.—After the delivery of each lecture, the children are to be interrogated in the words of Lewis, concerning the doctrines which have been explained, to which questions their knowledge of his exposition will furnish them with proper answers. May all who are concerned in the education of youth, pay due attention to this excellent little book! By so doing, they will lay a good foundation for the christian improvement, together with the present and future happiness of their families and pupils.

greatest

greatest consequence both to your own souls, and the souls of all your dependents; they are not the fictions of human invention, but they are the sacred doctrines, and awful declarations of God himself; and on your observance or neglect of them your eternal happiness or misery depends. Whilst, therefore, the ministers of the gospel deliver no other than the doctrines of the gospel, they have an undoubted right not only to expect but to demand likewise both your attendance and attention. Consider these awful words which our ever-blessed Redeemer spoke to his Apostles, and first preachers of the gospel, and in them to all their successors in the ministry: He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.—*Luke x. 16.* It is evident then from hence, that every wilful neglect of the ordinances of religion; every contempt of sacred persons, sacred offices, or sacred truths, is highly displeasing both to God and Christ, and injurious to the souls of men; and perhaps no age was ever more guilty in all these respects than the present. We are expressly told, however, that those who honour God, he will honour; and that they who despise him shall be lightly esteemed. And if you are lightly esteemed,

that

that is, if you are rejected of God, you must be miserable both in this world and the next. I exhort, therefore, and do most earnestly beseech all you who are fathers or mothers, masters or mistresses, either of families or schools, to take especial care to instil into the minds of your children, scholars and servants, the knowledge, fear and love of God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. This is a matter of indispensable duty, and you are expressly required to discharge it faithfully and diligently to the present improvement and future comfort both of yourselves and families. And if to the benefit of your good instructions you add, (as you are bounden) your fervent prayers to God for a blessing, together with the advantage of a good example, you have then the greatest reason to expect to prosper in these pious endeavours.—This, however, is certain, that such a conduct will be suitable to your christian profession; it will afford great satisfaction to your own minds, and will likewise be a great help to me as your minister in promoting the edification of your children. But unless you do use your authority, and afford me that necessary assistance which God expressly requires, and I may justly demand from you, I cannot hope for
that

that success or comfort in this important part of my pastoral labour, which, through the Divine Blessing, I could hardly fail of when conscientiously assisted by you. I am sensible that it is my bounden duty to instruct your children by a diligent and faithful discharge of this great duty of catechizing; and I am very desirous, God is witness! to fulfil it. To this end I propose, notwithstanding former discouragements, to persevere in an actual repetition of these practical lectures: For, as the principles of our holy religion, are always the same, a plain and concise method of explaining these principles, and enforcing the duties arising from them can never be unreasonable. Nor should those who have once, or twice, or perhaps oftener attended them, and have learned Lewis's exposition of the church-catechism, think it needless to attend them any longer: For, as the wisest and best of men want frequently to be reminded of their duty, and as their eternal satisfaction depends on the important truths which are contained and explained in these lectures, they ought to give all diligence, that they may make a still greater proficiency in christian knowledge, so that as they grow in years they may grow in grace too. Forgetting those things that are behind,

behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, they should press towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—If they neglect to do so, the grand enemy of souls will take away the good seed of the word which was formerly sown in their hearts, and then they will remain barren and unfruitful in the ways of religion. To avoid this great danger, all ministers, parents, masters, mistresses, and sponsors, should endeavour to explain unto children, as they become capable of understanding them, the great importance of gospel privileges, and the right they may have in them. This will be a likely way, through the Divine Blessing, to excite them to the exercise of a lively faith, and a sincere repentance. Indeed, it is a justice we owe to God; to Jesus Christ whom he has sent; to our little ones, and to our own souls, that we should be instant in season, and out of season, to instruct them in, and to recommend to them the genuine principles of true religion. Sensible of this, I hereby declare, that it is my sincere desire and intention, diligently and faithfully to discharge this great duty of catechizing; and in pursuance of this resolution I now publicly call upon all you who are parents, masters or mistresses of families,

milies, or schools, or have been sponsors at
 baptism, to join heartily with me in this
 most important undertaking: Nay, I adjure
 you in the name of the great and good God,
 and of Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
 as you regard either your own salvation, or
 the salvation of the souls committed to your
 charge; and as you will answer for their ne-
 glect at the judgment-seat of Christ, to assist
 me by your authority and endeavours; by
 your good examples, and by your earnest and
 fervent prayers in the due discharge of this
 indispensable duty. Perhaps you are very
 anxious to provide large fortunes for your
 children, and yet you do not know that they
 have a day to live; perhaps a coffin and a
 shroud will soon, very soon, be all that they
 will stand in need of at your hands:—Think
 then what a dreadful reflection would fill
 your mind, whilst standing by the corpse of
 a beloved child, to consider that you had been
 toiling for his worldly profit and grandeur,
 but had taken little or no care to promote the
 welfare of his immortal soul. To prevent
 these dismal reflections, and the dreadful con-
 sequences of an unprepared death to you, my
 brethren, diligently endeavour to train up
 your children, and all your domestics, to an
 early

early acquaintance with their God and Saviour. Exhort them to remember their great and good Creator in the days of their youth; frequently remind them of their baptismal vow, and of the indispensable obligation which they are under to observe it. Instruct them in all the articles of the christian faith, and shew them what a quickening influence they ought to have on their lives and actions. In short, carefully point out to them their deplorable state in consequence both of their original sin, and actual transgressions; and then, and not till then, they will, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, see the great need of a Saviour. A deep conviction of sin will produce a serious sense of their misery both by nature and practice; and will lead them, by the grace of God, to see the inestimable value of the covenant of grace. This will bring them with humility and gratitude to the throne of grace, in the name of Jesus Christ, to receive the salvation which he has purchased for them. Thus being freed from sin, through the blood of Christ, and become servants unto God through the influence of his grace, they will have their fruit unto holiness, and the end will be everlasting life.

SECTION VII.

Of CONFIRMATION.

CONFIRMATION is a solemn rite, at first instituted by the Apostles, and ever since retained in the church of Christ.— It is so called because baptized persons, who are come to years of discretion, do then in the presence of God and the congregation, *confirm* what their godfathers and godmothers did at baptism for them; that is, they hereby solemnly take upon themselves their baptismal engagements. What these engagements are, we are very plainly taught in the first part of our excellent church Catechism, which therefore ought to be attentively considered by all before they come to be confirmed.

Indeed, confirmation is not to be looked upon as a *mere ceremony*, (which it too often is,) but rather as a *solemn institution*. (*Acts viii. 17. xix, 5, 6.*) The laying on of hands* is mentioned

* The imposing, or laying on of hands, is an ancient and venerable rite which was used in the primitive church upon several occasions; particularly in confirmation, when baptized persons were brought before the church, to acknowledge, confirm, and renew their baptismal covenant with God, and to receive the

tioned by St. Paul, (*Heb. vi. 2.*) as a fundamental principle of christianity; and by this phrase ancient interpreters have generally (if not always) understood confirmation.

In the primitive church, the effects of confirmation were *extraordinary gifts*, such as speaking in divers tongues, prophesying, &c. these were necessary in the infancy of christianity. But, when (as the prophet *Isaiab* had foretold, chap. xlix. 23.) kings became the nursing fathers of the christian church, and queens its nursing mothers; when the profession of christianity was regularly established, and settled, and, by Divine Providence, placed under the protection of the civil power, then God, who does nothing in vain, thought proper to withdraw them.

It is certain, however, that though the *extraordinary gifts* of the *Holy Ghost* have long since ceased, and been with-held from the christian church, yet, his *ordinary operations* and *influences* are still continually vouchsafed to it. The *Holy Spirit* of God does now as *certainly*, though not as *sensibly* as before, guide

the benefit of public prayer, and Episcopal benediction, in order to the further endowments to grace, to perform their vows, adorn their profession, and be admitted to the Lord's Table, as complete members of the visible church of Christ.

BURKITT.

the

the church of Christ by his secret and invisible communications. These spiritual communications are doubtless received by those who are duly qualified to partake of them in this regular and ministerial way; that is, by confirmation.

The happy effect of this solemn institution to those who are rightly prepared for it, is the sure and certain reception of those ordinary helps and assistances of the *Holy Spirit*, which are indispensably necessary to enable them to perform the duties of a christian life, *to work out their own salvation, and to make their calling and election sure.*

Indeed, all christians do most assuredly stand in need of the sacred influences of God's *Holy Spirit*. These are necessary to the great purposes of conviction of sin, both original, and actual; to enlighten our understandings in spiritual things; to enliven our affections in the discharge of religious duties; and to renew and sanctify both our hearts and lives.

You hence learn, that the observance of this venerable institution was not intended to be confined to the age of the apostles, for this plain reason, because it is highly useful, and beneficial; and, when rightly observed, tends to relieve the spiritual wants of christians in
all

all ages of the church. For this reason this solemn rite has been practised by christians from the time of the apostles in all succeeding ages to the present day. This appears by the united testimony of the fathers of the christian church, and is evident from the authority of ecclesiastical history. The church of England, speaking of confirmation, in her sixtieth canon declares, that, "It hath been a solemn, "ancient, and laudable custom; continued "from the apostles' time; that all Bishops "should lay their hands upon children, baptized and instructed in the catechism of the "christian religion, praying over them, and "blessing them."

You may learn from the fore-going observations, the origin, the antiquity, and the use of confirmation.

It is necessary, however, to remind those who intend to be confirmed; that by passing thro' the form, they will receive no benefit, or advantage, unless they seriously resolve, and endeavour by prayer, and reading the holy scriptures; by serious self-examination, consideration, and watchfulness to obtain help from God.

And here I cannot help giving an Exhortation, to a serious and devout behaviour at, and

and after confirmation.—The scandalous indecencies which are often seen on this occasion, are painful and offensive, to every serious person; and plainly shew that all who are guilty of them have no true sense of religion. If the king should condescend to admit you into his presence on business of the highest importance to your temporal happiness, you would esteem it an high honor, and be very careful to avoid every thing that might offend or displease him. How much more circumspect and cautious then ought you to be, with respect to your deportment, when you are admitted by the *King of kings* into his own house! to enter into a most solemn covenant and engagement, on the observance or violation of which your everlasting **ALL** depends. Keep thy foot, therefore, that is, be careful of thy behaviour; look well to thy conduct, when thou goest to the house of God on this solemn occasion; and consider that his eye is upon thee. Remember that our God is a jealous God, and he will be sanctified in all them that come nigh him—*Lev. x. 3.* To true believers, and humble penitents, God is love; but to all impatient sinners, (who are destitute of an interest in Jesus Christ) he is a consuming fire—

Heb. xii.

Heb. xii. 29. Be not high minded, therefore, but fear.

To renew your baptismal vow ; to take it upon yourselves ; and thereby enter into covenant with the Almighty, is indeed a most serious and awful matter. Surely then, you ought to enter upon this solemn transaction, with an holy fear of offending this great and glorious God, with an humble, serious, and devout frame of mind. Take heed, therefore, to yourselves, and to your whole behaviour when you attend on this solemn and venerable rite. Pray earnestly for a double portion of the *Holy Spirit*, to keep you from falling : Be sober, be vigilant. Your ghostly enemy will surely endeavour at this solemn season, to discompose your minds, by the remembrance of your former sins, tempting you to yield to despair ; or, to engage your attention with some trivial concerns, or excite you to behave with shameful and unbecoming levity. By some, or perhaps, by all these means the tempter will strive to bring guilt on your souls, and prevent your receiving the unspeakable comforts of God's grace. Be watchful, therefore, and look steadfastly unto Jesus Christ for help, with a penitent heart, and a believing eye ; and he will surely preserve you from the snares of the destroyer.

M

When

When you have been confirmed, and the office is concluded ; I would advise you to retire *immediately* to your closets ; commune with your own hearts, search the scriptures, and earnestly pray to God for his grace, that you may always remember, and live suitably to those solemn engagements that you have taken upon you. Beware of vain companions, and those evil communications which corrupt good manners. Remember, that, in yourselves you are poor, weak, frail, sinful creatures, and utterly incapable of doing any thing that is spiritually good ; you are surrounded too with very subtle and powerful enemies, The world will tempt you with its deceitful vanities ; the flesh, or your corrupt nature, with an inordinate desire of sensual gratifications ; and satan will endeavour by various stratagems and devices, to ruin and destroy your souls. These considerations should stir you up earnestly to seek after the grace of God. This, and this alone can enable you to triumph against the world, the flesh and the devil ; and keep you by the mighty power of God, thro' faith, unto salvation. My grace, says the Redeemer, is sufficient for thee—*2 Cor. xii. 9.* A most comfortable assurance this ; and it is as *true* as it is comfortable.

This

This is undeniably proved by the happy experience of all real christians. They daily find that the grace of Christ is sufficient for them in all afflictions; it is sufficient for their preservation in the path of duty; sufficient for their support under every difficulty; sufficient to make them more holy, more humble, more heavenly-minded, more watchful, and more conformable to the spotless example of Jesus Christ. Seek diligently after an interest in your Redeemer, and covet earnestly the grace of God: This is the greatest and best of God's gifts to men, through Jesus Christ; without which you cannot be happy, and with which you cannot be miserable. In short, let that excellent prayer which the Bishop offered up to God on your behalf in public, be the daily wish, and language of your souls in private. And may the great and good God and Saviour of his church, defend you all with his heavenly grace, that you may continue his for ever; and daily increate in his Holy Spirit more and more, until you come to his everlasting kingdom! *Amen.*

A prayer before confirmation, to be used by those that are prepared for it:*

Most merciful God, by whose gracious providence I was born of christian parents, and

* By Mr. Nelson.

early

early dedicated to thee in holy baptism; make me thoroughly sensible, I beseech thee, of thy infinite goodness, in bestowing upon me the blessed privileges of being made a member of thy church, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

Grant, O Lord, that, by the assistance of thy grace, I may carefully and zealously perform all those things which thou wouldest have me do: Grant that I may continually resist the devil, and all those temptations by which he seeks to destroy me: That I may renounce all covetous desires of honor, riches, and pleasure, and all those evil customs and maxims of the world, which alienate men's minds from the love of God: That I may mortify the inordinate appetites of my own corrupt nature, of my own carnal mind: That I may believe all thy holy revelations, and keep thy blessed will and commandments all the days of my life.

And now, O Lord, that I am about to renew the solemn vow of my baptism, and publicly in thy presence to ratify all those things I then promised by my sureties; I humbly beseech thee to enlighten my mind with the knowledge and understanding of that solemn engagement I then made, and am now about to confirm; influence my will and all
the

the faculties of my soul, heartily and sincerely to perform it : Let not the many and grievous sins that I have committed, deprive me of those assistances of thy Holy Spirit, which I now expect to receive ; but on my true repentance and faith, let the precious blood of my Saviour wash away all my past sins, and grant that I may be enabled to mortify and subdue them for the time to come. And for as much as without thee I am not able to please thee, pour thy Holy Spirit into my heart, that by his holy inspiration I may think those things which are good, and by his merciful guidance may perform the same, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose blessed name and words I continue to pray, saying,

Our Father, &c.

A prayer after confirmation, which may be said while others are confirming ; and may be added to the evening prayers by the party confirmed :

Blessed and praised be thy holy name, O Lord, for those fresh supplies of grace, which thou hast been pleased to communicate to me.

Blessed be thy name for those comfortable assurances thou hast given me of thy favour and goodness towards me. Blessed be thy name for that privilege thou hast now bestowed

ed upon me of approaching thy holy table, and of strengthening and refreshing my soul by partaking there of the body and blood of Christ.

Increase in me, O Lord, more and more the gifts of thy Holy Spirit, that I may be wise for eternity, and make it the chief business of my life to please thee in all my actions; that I may love and fear thee above all things; that I may be just and righteous in all my dealings, and ready to communicate to the necessities of others; that I may keep a constant watch over myself, so as not to exceed the bounds of temperance and sobriety.

Grant, O Lord, my corrupt nature may be daily renewed and purified by thy Holy Spirit; that no danger or persecution may affright me from my duty; that no pleasure may make me careless and negligent in the performance of it; and that, under afflictions most grievous, to flesh and blood, I may be entirely resigned and submit to thy holy will and pleasure. Let thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, so guide and govern me through the whole course of my short life in this world, that I may not fail to obtain eternal life in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

DIREC-

DIRECTIONS for the better disposition of the youth, in their respective cures for their confirmation by the Bishop, and their subsequent approach to the Lord's Table:—*

I. That every parochial minister inquire in his parish who they are, who having been baptised, are not confirmed.

II. That he apply himself to such, and examine them, and instruct them fully in the principles of the christian religion, and especially those which relate to their vow in baptism; asking them particularly these questions, to which their sureties answer in their name, viz. ‘Dost thou renounce?’ ‘Dost thou believe in God?’ &c. ‘Wilt thou obediently keep God's holy will?’ &c.

III. That he shew them the nature and use of infant baptism and confirmation, and the necessity of an early dedication of themselves to the service of Christ, as he has opportunity in private, or at least in some public sermon, or catechetical exercise.

IV. That he permit none to come again, who have been confirmed already.

V. That he bring none to be confirmed who are under fourteen years of age, unless they are greater proficient in christian know-

* Given by his Grace the Lord Arch-bishop of Canterbury, to the parochial clergy.

ledge and piety, than children ordinarily are at those years.

VI. That he set down the names of those he finds fit, and intends to present, in a list, together with their respective ages.

VII. That he desire their sureties or parents, or some one or other of them, if it may be, to come along with him and them, at the time of confirmation.

VIII. That all possible care be taken to prevent crowds in the chancel, and to keep the whole church from rude noises and disturbances,

IX. When he comes with the persons to be confirmed, that he endeavour to bring them in the order as they stand upon the list, and call them over; and after they have answered to their names, that he present them.

X. That he take care that none of them depart till the whole office be finished.

XI. That he keep the list by him, that he may remember who are to be called upon to prepare for the Lord's Supper.

XII. That he frequently apply himself to them in private admonition, to excite and assist their preparation for the Lord's Table.

SECTION

SECTION VIII.

Of READING *the* SCRIPTURES.

IT is the indispensable duty of every christian diligently to read the holy bible. This evidently appears from the injunction given by our Saviour, that we should search the scriptures. Indeed we are bound to do so in point of interest, as well as duty; for they are given by inspiration of God, and are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. And yet, alas! many I fear do very seldom look seriously into this sacred volume, which is a striking, tho' melancholy proof of the depravity of human nature. As a disordered stomach nauseates wholesome food, so does the carnal mind the sincere milk of the word. The unregenerate, who are blind to spiritual things, and dead in trespasses and sins, neither know nor seek to know the important truths which are contained in God's holy law. The Apostle assures us that the holy scriptures were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Hence it is that a pious writer calls the bible a letter wrote to us by

N

the finger of God; it is a transcript of the Divine will in Christ Jesus concerning us. — Should an earthly monarch condescend to write to us, and offer us great possessions, immunities, and privileges; nay more, to take us into a most near and dear intimacy and friendship with him, how frequently should we review the deed, that confirmed a title to such invaluable privileges! — How loudly should we extol his kindness? What delight should we take in speaking of his goodness and bounty to all around us? But, alas! when the King of kings writes, and most expressly enjoins us to read; when he freely offers us in and through Christ the pardon of our sins, and the justification of our persons; sanctification through the influence of his Spirit, and a crown of life, how shamefully remiss are we, how insensible of such invariable blessings, and how unthankful for them? To wipe off this reproach with respect to yourselves, let it be your daily care in future, diligently to peruse the sacred writings both in your closet and in your families. That you may duly and profitably discharge this great duty, the following particulars are indispensably requisite, viz. prayer, humility of mind, reverence, sincerity, attention, self-application, diligence, faith, meditation.

Let

Let us briefly consider these requisites: 1st, The necessity of prayer.—As we are all by nature ignorant of divine and spiritual things, and blind to the saving truths of God's word, so it highly behoves us to call upon Him by earnest and fervent prayers, for the assistance of his holy Spirit. By the influence of this sacred Agent, the vail of spiritual darkness will be removed from your minds, and you will clearly discern the things that belong to your everlasting peace. He will convince you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; nay, and he will take of the things of Christ, and will shew them unto you. Whenever you take a bible into your hands, therefore, lift up your heart to God, in devout and pious ejaculations, to this effect:—Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law; let thy word be a light unto my feet, and a lamp unto my paths; order my steps in thy word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. The judicious and pious Mr. Burkitt has well observed, that if you read the word of God without prayer, you must expect to read it without profit.

2. A second requisite to a profitable reading of the holy scriptures is humility of mind.—We are all proud by nature, and apt to

think of our intellectual capacities more highly than we ought to think. This pride of understanding is very offensive to God, and will utterly preclude the reception of divine truths; for this reason, the Apostle enjoins you not to be wise in your own conceits; and assures you that the natural man, be he ever so wise and learned, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.— If therefore you have any regard for the sacred truths of the gospel, and wish to understand them, it highly behoves you earnestly to pray to God for true humility of mind; a child-like temper and disposition of soul, which will dispose you meekly and readily to receive the truth, as it is in Jesus: Without this you may be ever learning, but will never be able to come to any saving knowledge of Divine truths. Them that are meek shall God guide in judgment, and such as are gentle them shall he learn his way: but He resisteth the proud and beholdeth them afar off.

3. A third requisite to a profitable reading of the holy scriptures, is reverence.—All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and this surely is a strong reason why we ought to treat it with the utmost reverence. It is
 God

God who speaks to us in and by his word, let all the earth keep silence before him, and attend to his voice with humility and godly fear. The bible is to all that converse with it, either the favour of life unto life, or of death unto death; that is, in a regular and proper use of it, it is the instrument of our salvation; but if we abuse, or wilfully pervert it, it will certainly promote and aggravate our destruction.—An awful consideration this! May we duly regard it: If we do so we shall never hear, or consult the sacred oracles in a careless or irreverent manner; but duly considering the supreme dignity of the Almighty, whose will they declare, we shall hear and regard them with attention and reverence.

4. A fourth requisite to a profitable reading of the holy scriptures, is sincerity.—By sincerity I mean a real desire to know the holy scriptures, in order that we may regulate both our principles and actions, according to the tenor of them. If we are destitute of this, all our knowledge of scripture will only aggravate our guilt, and encrease our condemnation. We are expressly assured, that if we know our master's will, and do it not, we shall be beaten with many stripes.—This is a dreadful denunciation, and ought to be well considered

considered by all who rest in a barren speculative knowledge of the word of God. Indeed, where sincerity is wanting, every thing is wanting : We may pretend to pray to God to hear, or read his word ; but if we are destitute of sincerity, none of the means of grace can bring either glory to God, or benefit to our own souls. It is certain that the scripture abounds with severe threatenings against those who presume to mock the great Searcher of hearts. There is an awful passage, which fully proves this point in *Ezekiel* xiv.—Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face ; should I be enquired of at all by them ? Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols —*Ezek.* xiv. 3, 4. You hence clearly see that the prayers of all insincere professors are an abomination to the Lord, and that they must expect to inherit a curse instead of a blessing.

5. A fifth requisite to a profitable perusal of the holy scriptures, is attention.—Too many read the bible in a careless and inattentive manner :

They

They consult it with as little reverence, and peruse it with as little, perhaps with less regard than they would an idle novel, or a licentious romance. Nothing can shew a profane spirit more than this; nothing can be more displeasing to the Divine Majesty. If the King should condescend to write to us, we should certainly give his epistle a serious and attentive perusal: but when the King of kings writes to us on matters of infinite importance to our eternal welfare, it highly behoves us seriously to consider the import of his letter. If we neglect to do so, we shall not only read the scriptures destitute both of pleasure and profit, but shall likewise contract great guilt by our profaneness. We cannot shew a greater affront to our God and Saviour than to treat his divine truths with cold indifference, and a stupid disregard.—And if you do so what can you expect but misery? Those that honour God, God will honour; but they that despise him, shall be lightly esteemed.—Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.

6. A sixth requisite to a profitable perusal of the holy scriptures, is self-application: that is, we must be careful to apply the truths we meet with in God's word to our own souls.—It is too common with many, when they
either

either read or hear God's word, to consider how far it is applicable to their neighbour's condition, whilst they entirely forget their own. But if we are truly wise, we shall look upon ourselves as most nearly concerned in what we read, and shall be most ready both to prove and judge our own selves, rather than our neighbour. When we read the threatenings contained in God's word, we should tremble under a sense of our guilt, and apply earnestly unto God for pardon, through Jesus Christ; and when we read the promises we ought diligently to pray to God to encrease our faith, that we may inherit them, and lay hold on the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

7. A seventh requisite to a profitable perusal of the bible, is diligence.—This is beautifully described in the book of *Proverbs*.—My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding: Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.—*Prov. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

We

We never can do the will of God unless we know it; and we never can know it without we diligently enquire concerning it.—We must frequently and assiduously read the bible, attentively consider the important truths therein recorded, and compare spiritual things with spiritual. We should carefully observe the scope and design of the sacred writers, the particular occasions on which they wrote, together with the circumstances peculiar to each. In short, if we would profit by the sacred oracles, we must have the same views in reading them, which God had in revealing his will to us: And these views are thus enumerated by the Apostle:—All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.

8. The eighth requisite to a profitable perusal of the scriptures, is faith.—Indeed, without faith it is impossible to please God, or receive any benefit from his word. There is in all of us, by nature, an evil heart of unbelief, inclining us to depart from the living God, and to disbelieve and disobey his word. It is highly necessary therefore, that we call upon him in earnest and fervent prayer for

O

a plen-

a plentiful supply of his holy Spirit ; so will he increase our faith and help our unbelief. Faith in Christ is indispensably necessary to our salvation. This is plain from our Lord's declaration : He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned. It is certain that many of the truths of revelation are above our reason, but there is not one of them contrary to it.— It is our bounden duty implicitly to believe every thing contained in the bible, for this plain reason, because it is impossible that God should either be deceived himself, or deceive us. If it should be asked what faith in Christ is, I answer, It implies a firm and lively belief of the whole truth as it is in Jesus ; or in other words, that we are lost sinners in ourselves, and that there is a full and free salvation for us in him. This faith is very different from a speculative assent, which is the fruit of education, and rests only in the head :— The faith of a true christian is of the operation of God, and it worketh by love ; that is, it produces a true love both to God and man, which shews itself in earnest endeavours to promote the glory of God on high, together with peace on earth, and good will towards men. Where this faith presides in the heart,

it

it unites the soul to Christ; it humbles the sinner; it exalts the Saviour; it promotes holiness. Faith is the eye of the soul, by which we discover the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the perfect purity of God's law, the misery of our natural state, the inestimable value of Christ our Saviour, the completeness of his salvation, the necessity of holiness, and the hope of glory. Such a faith as this will influence the life and conversation, bring love, joy, and peace into the heart of its professors, and cause our souls to persevere in the path of duty, by looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith.

9 The last requisite to a profitable perusal of the holy scriptures, is devout meditation. Indeed, meditation on the word of God is as necessary to enable us to receive benefit thereby, as digestion is to our food.—The bible may be in your hands every day, but it is certain unless you seriously and attentively meditate on what you have read, you never can derive spiritual nourishment from it.

To assist your meditations on the holy scriptures, and, under the influence of divine grace, to lead you more fully into the knowledge of them, I would recommend it to you at all times, (if you have opportunity) to

consult Bishop Patrick, and Dr. Lowth's commentaries, as critical expositors, and the late Mr. Matt. Henry's, as a practical writer on the old testament.—On the new testament you will find that Mr. Burkitt's expository notes, and Dr. Doddridge's family expositor will be very beneficial. These books are truly valuable, and will amply repay both your expence in purchasing, and your labour in consulting them.

You have now seen the requisites for a profitable perusal of God's holy word; may you pray earnestly, and labour diligently to attain them. The grace of God in Christ, is sufficient to furnish you not only with these requisites, but likewise with every good and perfect gift.—Ask, therefore, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.—Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.—Let the law of God be your daily study; and let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. The Bereans are commended for their diligence in searching the scriptures, and I am sure that it is both your duty and interest to do so likewise. The word of God is the rule both of faith and manners; and by the contents of this sacred volume, you must be tried

at

at the last day. The word that I have spoken, says our Redeemer, the same shall judge him at the last day—*John* xii. 4, 8: And if so, how careful, how solicitous ought you to be, to acquaint yourselves with the revealed will of God? Unless you know the Lord's will you never can do it; and if you are not careful to know Christ, and diligent in performing his sacred will, you are truly wretched in time, and must be miserable for ever. If then you desire to be saved, you must pray earnestly for grace, and search the scriptures daily, that you may know what is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Do not let your bibles lie any longer neglected, but diligently seek after the Holy Spirit of God, and let your study be in them both day and night. It is impossible fully to express the great advantages that will accrue to you from this sacred employment. The word of God, when spiritually received, is the food of our souls: How then can they be supported if we neglect it? There is every blessing, and every comfort, all we wish, and all we want, to make us truly good and happy, contained in the sacred volume. If we are poor, here we may find Christ, who is the true riches, the pearl of great price; if we are sick,
here

here we may find the spiritual physician who is able and willing to heal all our diseases, whether bodily or spiritual. If we are ignorant of Christ, and without God in the world, here, through grace, we shall find that the day-spring from on high will visit us, and the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing on his wings. If we are true christians, here we shall find the most reviving cordials, the greatest and most precious promises, that we might have strong consolation who have fled to the cross of Christ for refuge, and have laid hold on the hope set before us. If we are afflicted, here we shall receive comfort; if we are persecuted, here we shall find protection; if we are under spiritual desertsions, this is a means of our recovery; if we are tempted to evil, the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, and by this we shall obtain the victory; if we are young, this is our counsellor; if we are old, this is our wisdom.—In short, whilst we live, the bible is the rule both of our faith and manners; and when dying, will serve as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and will be your guide to eternal glory. You may hence learn, that the holy psalmist had the greatest reason to pronounce the man blessed whose delight is in the law of the Lord—

Pf. i. 2.

Pf. i. 2. He shall be like a tree planted by the water-side, that will bring forth his fruit in due season.—His leaf also shall not wither; and look, whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper —*Pf. i. 3, 4.* You see then, from the authority of God's word, that you cannot take a surer way to promote even your temporal happiness, than by exercising yourselves in the law of the Lord, both day and night.—Indeed, you have every motive, whether temporal, spiritual, or eternal, to induce you to attend diligently to this sacred employment. These motives are well and concisely expressed by a certain great and celebrated writer :—
 “Search the scriptures, says he, they have
 “God for their author, salvation for their
 “end, and truth without any mixture of
 “error for their matter.” Since it is plain
 then, that God, who at sundry times, and in
 divers manners spake in times past unto the
 fathers by the prophets, hath in these last
 days spoken unto us by his Son, let us all at-
 tentively hear, and read, thankfully receive,
 and cordially obey his holy gospel. Let us
 receive this glorious dispensation, not as the
 word of men, but as it is in truth, the word
 of God, which effectually worketh in them
 that believe : This is the infallible word of
 that

that God who liveth and abideth for ever ; this is that wisdom from above which all the adversaries of it shall not be able to gainsay or resist. Let it be your care, therefore, both to believe and obey that form of doctrine which is delivered to you in the sacred writings.—

In short, let us all, both high and low, rich and poor, diligently strive to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest those important and sacred truths which are contained in the holy scriptures. Let us not only study them ourselves, but let us remember likewise, that we are enjoined by God to teach them diligently to our children, to speak of them when we sit in our houses, when we walk by the way, when we lie down, and when we rise up. And if we steadfastly persevere in this sacred employment, we shall surely find the happy effects of it both in ourselves and others : As we grow in years, we shall be transformed by the renewing of our minds in righteousness and in holiness ; we shall be filled with all joy and peace in believing, and shall abound in every good word and work.—

Then will our conversation be such as becometh the gospel ; it will serve to the use of edifying, and may minister grace unto the hearers. This will be acting in a manner
suitable

suited to our christian profession, and to the solemn and indispensable obligations which we are under to do every thing to the glory of God.—Then will our great Redeemer love us, and will more and more manifest himself unto us: He will defend us from all perils and dangers, and preserve us from our ghostly enemies, and from everlasting death. Let us all, therefore, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby; and let us receive, with meekness, the ingrafted word, which is able to save our souls.

P

SECTION

SECTION IX.

Of PSALMODY.

IT is the duty of all reasonable creatures to praise and adore their great Creator and Preserver. In the revealed will of God, this duty of singing praises to our Creator, is very frequently repeated, and clearly enjoined. In the book of *Psalms* holy David exhorts us to sing praises with understanding; yea, he calls upon every thing that hath breath to praise the Lord—*Pf.* xlvij. 7.—cl. 1, 6. In the new testament, St. Paul exhorts the Colossians to let the word of Christ dwell in them richly, in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord—*Col.* iii. 16, 17. We may hence learn, that psalmody, or singing of psalms, both in public assemblies and private families, is a great and necessary duty, which ought to be performed by all who are capable of it.—This duty is most shamefully neglected by many, and therefore I shall endeavour to prove, 1st, The reasonableness and necessity

of

of singing the praises of God ; 2dly, I shall point out the right manner of performing this sacred duty.

I. Let us consider the reasonableness and necessity of this holy exercise.—This necessity, from the many injunctions which we meet with in scripture respecting it, and its reasonableness, will appear from considering the innumerable blessings which we daily and hourly receive at the hands of God. God is not only the Author of our being, but likewise of our well-being too. His sun shines, and his showers fall, not only on the righteous, but on the unthankful and evil. He crowneth the year with his goodness, and his clouds drop fatness. It is meet and right, therefore, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto the Almighty, and everlasting Lord God. We should praise him for all his goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men : We should bless him “ for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life ; “ but above all for his inestimable love in the “ redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus “ Christ ; for the means of grace, and for “ the hope of glory.” Indeed it is a joyful

and pleasant thing to be thankful; and if we dislike this sacred employment of singing praises to God, and have no inclination to join with others who are so employed, it is a melancholy proof that we are still unrenewed, dead in trespasses and sins, aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, having no hope, and without God in the world. If we had a true love for God, we should delight both in hearing and singing his praises, and we should gladly embrace every opportunity of so doing. The blessed inhabitants of the celestial mansions sing incessant songs of praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift; and if we hope to partake of their bliss, we must pray for grateful hearts, and labour to shew forth the praises of our God and Saviour, not only with our lips, but likewise in our lives, by giving up ourselves to his service, and by walking before him in newness of life. We hence learn, that it is the duty of all christians, to join heartily in singing psalms and praises to the Almighty in his solemn worship, that so they may, with one mind and one mouth, glorify God—*Rom. xv. 6.*

It is justly observed by a pious writer of our church, (see Burrough's devout psalmist) that the design of using vocal prayer and praise

in

in the congregation, is not to make him that planted the ear, hear, but that our own affections may be excited by it, and that the whole congregation may join in the common address of prayer or praise to God. That none may think themselves at liberty to disregard this important duty, the holy psalmist calls upon persons of every rank, character, and condition in life to join in the performance of it. Kings of the earth, says he, and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the name of the Lord—*Psf.* cxlviii. To praise the name of the Lord is the indispensable duty of every christian; nor is he worthy of the christian name, or to enjoy the breath of life, who will not employ that breath in praising the gracious Giver of it, and all other blessings both spiritual and temporal. The wise son of Sirach made a very pious and grateful resolution: The Lord, says he, has given me a tongue, and I will praise him therewith—*Ecclus.* li. 22. It is the character of dumb idols, to have mouths, and speak not; but of every good man, to speak of God's honor, and to sing of his praise in his holy temple—xxix. 9. The psalmist frequently calls his tongue his glory; because
the

the tongue is the chief instrument of glorifying God, and was made principally for this very end; and it is very certain that they are never so much our glory as when we employ them in singing the praises of our great Creator. King David thought it no disparagement to his royal character, to employ himself in composing psalms for the solemn worship of God, and to preside himself, and join in singing them. And is this heavenly exercise become now so contemptible a thing, and looked upon with such indifferency, that few take care to join in it at all; and fewer still to perform it with any suitable reverence or understanding—a sad presage this, of horrible lukewarmness, and a dying zeal and devotion! Let us, however, be careful to avoid such ungrateful insensibility, by singing the praises of God with understanding and with the voice of melody. Indeed, it is not sufficient that we barely sing; and therefore I shall proceed 2dly, to point out to you the right manner of performing this sacred duty.

II. When we sing the praises of God, we should do it with pious and devout affections, and with a due attention of mind. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth; that is, they

they must join the inward devotion of their minds, to their outward acts of homage.

True devotion requires a due concurrence of the understanding and affections.—The sincere elevation of the spirit is the life of psalmody: It is this which gives value to the external act; and without this, the tongues of men or angels are but like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; that is, empty and unmeaning sounds. But when the devotion of the heart concurs with the melody of the voice, the exercise resembles the praise of angels, and the harmony of heaven. To this end there is some preparation necessary, before we begin to sing: A due apprehension of the greatness of God, and a serious recollection of his goodness and mercies, will, by the assistance of Divine grace, dispose our hearts to reverence and thankfulness; this will be a sure way to fix the attention of our minds, and to inflame our affections too.—Such was the practice of holy David, when about to celebrate the praises of God upon his harp. His first care was to set his heart in tune, and to have it devoutly affected with a deep sense of the Divine mercy and goodness. My heart is fixed; or, as the word properly signifies, prepared; O God, my heart is prepared;

pared; I will sing and give praise. Awake up my glory, awake lute and harp. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people; I will sing unto thee among the nations; for thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds—*Pf. lviii. 8, 9, 10.* In *Psalms lxxxviii. 26*, he calls upon others to join in this sacred employment. Give thanks, O Israel, unto God the Lord, in the congregations, from the ground of the heart. Indeed, when we sing the praises of God, we must take care that our hearts go along with our tongues, otherwise our services will not be accepted. This the Apostle intimates when he enjoins the Ephesians to sing and make melody in their hearts; and the Colossians to sing with grace in their hearts to the Lord—*Ep. v. 19.—Col. iii. 16.* However great our skill may be in music, and however harmonious our voices may be, yet it is certain that we make no melody to the Lord, unless our hearts join in the concert. It is our bounden duty to serve God in spirit and in truth; to honor him with the devotion of our hearts, as well as the tribute of our lips; and to do the latter, while we withhold the former, is to *offer him the blind and the lame*: which will be rejected with abhorrence and indignation.

It may justly be observed that the power of harmony is great in composing the affections, and in exalting devotion in the solemn worship of God. The soul of man is naturally pleased with melody; and the animal spirits which serve to excite the affections, move in conformity to the impressions they receive in musical sounds.

“ The very harmony of
 “ sounds, says the learned and judicious
 “ Hooker, being rightly framed and carried
 “ from the ear to the spiritual faculties of
 “ our souls, is, by a native puissance and
 “ efficacy, greatly available to bring to a
 “ perfect temper, what is there troubled;
 “ apt as well to quicken the spirits as to
 “ allay that which is too eager; sovereign
 “ against melancholy and despair; forcible
 “ to draw forth tears of devotion, if the mind
 “ be such as can yield them, and able to
 “ move and to moderate all afflictions”—

Eccl. Pol. Book 5. In the holy scriptures we have two remarkable instances of the propriety of these observations: The one is recorded in *i Samuel xvi.* and it respects King Saul.—

When an evil spirit from the Lord troubled Saul, his physicians (called his servants) advised the King, that a man should be sought out who was a cunning player on the

Q. harp

harp : And it shall come to pass, say they; when the evil spirit of God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. The king took his advice, and sent for David, who was recommended for his excellent skill upon the harp, and the success was remarkable ; for, when the evil spirit was upon Saul, David took an harp and played with his hand ; so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him—*verse 23*. The other instance is recorded in *2 Kings iii*.—When Jehoram the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and the king of Edom were distressed, together with their armies, for want of water, they applied themselves to the prophet Elisha. The spirit of prophecy was not always present with the prophets, so as to deliver oracles when they pleased ; and the prophets mind was at this time disturbed both with sorrow on the departure of Elijah, and with indignation against the sins of Jehoram ; and the Spirit of God rests only on a calm, sedate mind, whose passions are allayed : For these reasons, the prophet called for a minstrel, or musician, to compose his mind ; and it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him, and then
he

propheſied both a ſupply of water and victory. Indeed, muſic is of great uſe, not only in calming the paſſions and compoſing the mind, but likewise by raiſing our ſpirits to ſuch a rapturous frame, as enables us to praiſe God with greater fervency and elevation of ſoul. Senſible of this, the pious pſalmiſt appointed the uſe of muſical inſtruments in the ſolemn worſhip of God; as cymbals, pſalteries, and harps—1 *Chron.* xvi. This is ſaid to be according to the commandment of David, and of God, the king's ſeer, and Nathan the prophet. And, to put the matter beyond all reaſonable objection, this is ſaid to be the commandment of the Lord by his prophets—2 *Chron.* xxix. 25. And the Lord himſelf expreſſed his approbation of ſuch muſic, in the uſe of pſalms and hymns in his ſolemn worſhip. For, as the Levites, who were the ſingers, being arrayed in white linen, ſtood with cymbals, and pſalteries, and harps; it came to paſs as they made one ſound to be heard in praiſing and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the inſtruments of muſic, and praiſed the Lord; in token of his divine pleaſure and approbation, it is added, The glory of the Lord filled the houſe of God—2 *Chron.* v. 13, 14. In ſhort,

Q 2

the

the whole book of psalms was composed, and and set to be sung with variety of musical instruments. Psalmody too is recommended to us by the example of our blessed Lord; for, we are informed in the gospel by St. Matthew, that Jesus sung an hymn with his disciples a little before his passion—*Matt. xxvi. 30.* And not only so, but we are informed by St. John, in the book of Revelation, that the heavenly choir do constantly sing the praises of God with musical harmony and instruments. In the vision of the four and twenty elders, they are represented to be every one of them singing with harps in their hands—*Rev. v. 6.* —And again, I heard from heaven, says he, the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and singing before the throne of God *Rev. xiv. 2.* You have now seen the reasonableness and necessity of singing the praises of God, together with the right manner of performing this sacred duty; that is, with pious and devout affections, and with due attention of mind. Further, we must do it to the best of our power, with melody and harmony. I shall now further remark, that it is our duty to perform this eminent part of Divine worship in a proper and reverent posture of body.

I know

I know it is a custom with many to continue sitting at the singing of the solemn praises of God. This, however, is a very indecent and irreverent practice, and calls loudly for reproof. Psalms of praise and thanksgiving are really and truly as much acts of Divine worship, as the different parts of prayer itself, and do, therefore, equally require a posture of devotion. This is evident from the Jewish and Christian church. We are informed in *1 Chronicles* xxiii. 30, that David appointed the Levites in the solemn worship of God, to *stand* every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and also at even: which rule was observed in the temple afterwards built by Solomon, as we read *2 Chron.* v. 12. In *2 Chron.* 7, 6, upon the like performance of the Levites, with instruments of music of the Lord, which David the king had made to praise the Lord, all the people are expressly said to observe the same reverent posture; and all Israel *stood* to join in the solemn praises of God. See also *2 Chron.* xx. 18, 19, where the several gestures of prayer and praise are expressly distinguished, and applied to their respective parts of Divine worship. 1st, They humbled themselves before God, and prayed either kneeling, or prostrate

prostrate on the ground; for it is said, all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. And when they came to sing praises to God, their reverential posture in this part of their service, is there particularly noticed: And the Levites *stood up* to praise the Lord God of Israel, with a loud voice on high. (See likewise 2 *Chron.* 29—*Neb.* xii. 46, compared with chap. ix 5.) These instances are abundantly sufficient to shew the special gesture of reverence which was appointed and used in singing psalms in the church of God under the old testament.

Standing, indeed, has ever been accounted a gesture expressive of respect and reverence. So in *Job.* xxix. 7, 8.—When I went out to the gate, and when I prepared my seat, the aged arose and stood up. And the Lord rebukes his people for treating him with less reverence than they would do an earthly prince—*Mal.* i. 8, saying, Offer it now thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? The application of this passage is very obvious to the case in hand. He plainly teaches that the customary expressions or forms of reverence that are used in a nation to shew honor and respect to our superiors, are
also

also used to express our honor and reverence to his Divine Majesty.

Indeed, this reverent posture of *standing* at singing praises to God, has universally obtained in all ages of the christian church. One of the fathers of the church, describing the practice of the church in his days, says, The people rising from prayer, stand up to sing psalms. And he further observes; that this custom was consonant and agreeable to all the churches of God.—(See *Ep. 63, ad Cler. Neocæs.*) Nay, if we wish to regulate our behaviour in this respect; by the practice of the holy angels in the heavenly choir, we must stand up when we sing the praises of God. For, in St. John's vision of the increase of the christian church, to so great a multitude which no man could number; they are all represented *standing* before the throne of God, and saying, salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb—*Rev. vii. 9, 10.*—See also *Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3*—*Rev. xv. 3, 4.* We may hence learn the obligation and reasonableness of our using a reverent posture of body when we sing the praises of God. The law of angels in heaven may well be allowed to regulate the worship of the church of God on earth: For, they are not two churches,

churches, but two parts of the same church; the one triumphant in heaven, the other militant on earth; and they have both the same Head and King, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

Indeed, Divine worship requires both external and internal reverence to express the homage and honor we design to pay to God thereby. Kneeling and standing are the usual gestures of honor and reverence to God mentioned in the holy scriptures: Kneeling is generally appropriated to prayer, and standing to praise, as appears from the authority of God's word. Sitting is a gesture too free and familiar to pretend adoration or worship. The revelation of God's will in his holy word, is to guide and direct us in his worship; which will not allow us to use such gestures in his solemn worship, as are signs of equality, familiarity, or contempt among men. If all cannot join in the melody of singing, yet they should endeavour to do so as well as they can; and at least to join in the devotion and reverence that attends it. Indeed, if we have any inward devotion and reverence for God in our minds, it will naturally shew itself by gestures of adoration in his solemn worship. Outward irreverence, therefore,

in

in Divine worship, is a sure evidence of an indevout and irreverent mind. The form of godliness is too often to be found without the inward power of it ; but wherever the power of true devotion and godliness is in the heart, it will naturally appear in the outward form and reverence of the body.

To conclude : You have now seen the reasonableness and necessity of singing the praises of God, and likewise the right manner of performing this sacred duty. Let it be your care, therefore, diligently to practise what you have heard ; and to join in the use of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, both in your families and in public-worship. The primitive christians were so full of zeal and devotion, that they would have thought it a very grievous thing to have been restrained from bearing a part in this sacred exercise ; and if we are not equally as desirous of so doing, it is because we are destitute of their ardent love to God, and his worship. Let us humble ourselves therefore, before God on this account, and fervently pray that the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts by the power of his holy Spirit, and then we shall not fail to offer unto God thanksgiving both with our heart and voice. To celebrate

R

the

praises of God is the most heavenly part of
 Divine service, and a duty of the greatest im-
 portance.—It highly concerns us; therefore,
 rightly to perform this sacred duty; and that
 we may do so, let us be careful to express a due
 regard to the declarations he has given us
 concerning it, in his holy word. It is inci-
 dent to human nature to err; but to persist in
 error after conviction; is truly impious, shock-
 ing, and inexcusable. The best of men are
 liable to mistake and inadvertency; but upon
 the first discovery of error; every true chris-
 tian is desirous to retract and reform. And
 sure if we duly reflect on the innumerable
 instances of the Divine love towards us, we
 shall be always ready to join in blessing and
 praising his holy Name: He at first created
 us, and still supports and preserves us; he
 has redeemed us from sin and misery, by the
 death and passion of his well-beloved Son
 Jesus Christ our Lord, and calls and invites
 us to repentance and salvation in and through
 this Divine Saviour. He is always ready to
 supply us with grace sufficient for all our spi-
 ritual wants, and has promised us through
 the Redeemer, peace in this life, and eternal
 happiness in the next. It is meet and right,
 therefore, and our bounden duty, that we
 should

should be ready and willing at all times, and in all places to sing the praises of our great and gracious God. Unto him, therefore, that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.—*Amen—Eph. iii. 20, 21.*

R 3 SECTION

SECTION X.

OF PSALMODY.

IN the foregoing section on this subject, I endeavoured to shew the reasonableness and necessity of singing the praises of our God; and 2dly, The right manner of performing this sacred duty. The former of these particulars I endeavoured to demonstrate by two arguments : The first was deduced from the many injunctions which are contained in scripture, both in the old and new testament concerning it ; the latter from the innumerable blessings and mercies which we daily and hourly receive from the hands of God.—I then proceeded to point out to you the right manner of performing this sacred duty.—I told you that when we sing the praises of God we should do it with pious and devout affections, and with a due attention of mind. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth ; that is, they must join the inward devotion of their minds, to their outward acts of homage.

The sincere elevation of the spirit is the life of psalmody ; it is this which gives value

to

to the external act, and without this the tongues of men and angels are but like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; that is, empty and unmeaning sounds. But when the devotion of the heart concurs with the melody of the voice, then it resembles the praise of angels, and the harmony of heaven. Indeed, psalmody, when rightly performed, is certainly the noblest part of Divine worship; I think it my duty, therefore, to do every thing in my power to promote a proper and lively performance of it in the congregation committed to my care. The injudicious choice of verses to be sung, has often been matter of great concern to me, and particularly the formal, unmeaning, and lifeless manner of singing them, and that only by a very small part of the congregation. This circumstance is much to be lamented: The tongue of men is (as I have already observed) called in scripture his glory; and sure I am, that it can never be more properly so called than when it is employed in singing the praises of the great King of kings, and Lord of lords. Some of you, perhaps, may not be qualified to perform this duty properly at present: Whilst this is the case, you had better content yourselves with joining the
rest

rest rather in heart than voice ; or in a low
 voice, otherwise you may occasion great con-
 fusion. But to you who are able, yet unwill-
 ing to bear a part in this heavenly employ-
 ment, what shall I say ? Shall I praise you
 in this ? I praise you not ; it is my duty
 rather to reprove you for this omission in a
 spirit of meekness and christian love. You
 may say, perhaps, that you are ashamed to
 join in this sacred exercise, but I must inform
 you, that if you are ashamed of your duty,
 and of praising your great, good, and glorious
 God and Saviour, that he will at the last day
 be ashamed of you.—Your shame is highly
 criminal and irrational too. And here I desire
 you will permit me to propose a few plain
 questions to you on this occasion, and hope
 you will consider both the reasonableness and
 importance of them in your retirements.—
 Why do you come to church ? Is it not to
 worship the great God of heaven and earth ;
 to bless and praise his holy name ; to humble
 yourselves before him on account of your
 innumerable sins, and to pray for pardon and
 grace, and a supply of all our wants both
 spiritual and temporal ? These either are, or
 ought to be your views in attending the pub-
 lic worship of God ; and it is certainly meet
 and

and right, and your bounden duty so to do. For, are you not, my brethren, the creatures of God? Does he not give you all things richly to enjoy? Are you not continually supported by his providence, and protected by his care? Surely you are: And if you are, ought you not therefore to bless and praise his holy Name for your creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life? But above all ought you not to magnify and adore him for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus Christ; and for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory? Think for a while, and take heed that you think seriously on these plain questions; and sure I am, that if you think rightly, you will certainly find that scripture, reason, and conscience will all answer in the affirmative to these enquiries.—Repent therefore of your former negligence, and resolve in future to join heartily as occasions may offer, in singing lustily, and with a good courage, the praises of your great and glorious God and Saviour.—This is your bounden duty; this is your happy privilege; this too is the chief employment of the holy angels, and of the saints in light. How then can we suppose ourselves duly qualified to
 enter

enter the regions of the blessed, and join with the heavenly choir above, unless we are perfectly willing (as we have ability, time, and opportunity) in singing the praises of our God and Saviour here below? Think seriously, I say, on these plain but important truths; and then I hope you will soon, by the Divine assistance, be brought to a better mind, join in a general chorus, and, to speak in the words of scripture, make a joyful noise to the God of your salvation, and sing his praises with understanding. To assist you in this good design, and with a view to promote the better performance of this duty of psalmody by all the congregation, I have provided and committed to the press a small collection of select portions of the psalms, appointed to be sung in churches, taken chiefly from the new version. I have selected but very few portions from the old version, for two reasons, 1st, Because I think the new version in general is much better than the old; and 2dly, Because if any other parts of it should be occasionally used, you may find them at the end of your common prayer-books.—Some select hymns by various authors, are likewise added to this collection of psalms, occasionally to be sung, in order that (according to the aposto-

lical

lical injunction) the word of Christ may dwell in you richly in all wisdom, whilst we admonish one another, not only in psalms, but also in hymns and spiritual songs: And God grant that in the use of all these we may sing praises with understanding, and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord. To this end let us all seek more and more earnestly after the enlightening, enlivening, and sanctifying influences of the holy Spirit of God; then will the celestial flame of Divine love be kindled in our hearts, and then will our praises and thanksgivings no longer remain dead and formal, but will rather become lively and animated sacrifices, well pleasing unto God, through Jesus Christ, and truly profitable to our own souls. Since then it evidently appears that psalmody is an important part of Divine worship, and when rightly performed highly conducive to the glory of God, and the good of souls, I must now exhort you not only to have regard to it yourselves, but likewise to encourage your domestics to join with you in it. You should seriously and earnestly recommend it both to your children and servants, (if capable) to endeavour to learn to sing, that they may

S

shew

shew forth the praises of their God and Saviour, who bountifully supplies all their wants, and calls them out of darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel. If you have a true relish for spiritual enjoyments yourselves, you will surely be anxious that all who belong to you may partake of them too. Your children and servants are in a great measure under your direction: Be careful, therefore, to employ that authority which God has given you over them in such a manner that you may promote the Divine glory, and set forward the salvation of their immortal souls. Consider that psalmody is a means of grace, as well as prayer, or hearing or reading the word of God, and therefore it ought not wilfully to be neglected either by you or them. Why were the psalms collected into English metre? You may find an answer to this question in your common prayer-books. It is there said that the psalms were collected into English metre, and set forth and allowed to be sung in all churches, and, observe, of *all the people together*, before and after morning and evening prayer; and also before and after sermons; and moreover in private houses, *for their godly solace, and comfort*, laying apart all ungodly songs
 and

and ballads, which tend only to the nourishing of vice, and corrupting of youth.

You now see what good and weighty reasons our church had for causing the psalms to be collected into English metre; namely, that they may be sung both in churches, and observe too, in private houses, for the godly solace and comfort of all her members.—But if we do not take a part in this heavenly exercise, both in public and family-worship, (as we are able) the design of the church is defeated, and our own godly solace and comfort hereby impeded. Whenever, therefore, we are disposed to rejoice, let us have regard to the apostle's injunction: Is any merry? Let him sing psalms; and let him not only do so himself, but let him take care to recommend the same pious practice to all who are placed under his direction and controul; especially to his children and servants; for, if he fails herein, it is but too probable that they will gratify their natural and corrupt taste, for singing with ungodly songs, and ballads, which (you hear our church tells you) tend only to the nourishment of vice, and corrupting of youth.—This is a weighty admonition; God grant you may all duly regard it!

S 2

I shall

I shall now beg leave to caution you against that indecent custom which is too prevalent in most, (if not in all congregations) of sitting when the praises of God are sung. Indeed it is our duty to perform this eminent part of divine worship, in a proper and reverent posture of body.

SECTION

ov
fo
fie
de
by
Bu
Go
we
wo
por
and
is,
tha
me
the
S
fati
den
God
be
gua

SECTION XI.

Of RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION.

THE argument which our Lord uses to excite the disciples to watchfulness over their words, is very awful, strong, and forcible. By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned—*Matt. xii. 37.* We shall be justified by our words says the pious and judicious Burkitt, not meritoriously, but declaratively. Good words declare goodness in ourselves, and we shall be declared good to others, by our words; if our words and actions do correspond and agree with one another. Death and life are in the power of the tongue; that is, according to the right or wrong use of that organ of speech, we may judge whether men are dead in sin, or alive to God; whether they are candidates for heaven or hell.

Since it appears then that a man's conversation is so declarative and decisive an evidence of the real state of his character before God, we should always endeavour that it may be as becometh the gospel, and diligently guard against the abuses of it. The tongue,
when

when properly employed, is certainly our glory ; but alas ! in an unregenerate state, it is an unruly member, and takes an active part in the general rebellion carried on against God, by all the faculties and members of the whole man. It is our duty and interest, therefore, to be very cautious in this respect ; for, we have the authority of an apostle to say, that if any man seem or pretend to be religious, and bridle not his tongue, that man's religion is vain.

That your conversation may be useful and edifying, take care to prevent its dwelling on improper subjects.—To this end you should frequently endeavor to introduce some religious topic, when it can be done with propriety ; otherwise it will be better for a while to omit it, lest instead of promoting, you inadvertently injure the cause of Christ.—Your Redeemer enjoins you not to cast your pearls before swine : But at proper seasons and in proper company you will find the greatest comfort and advantage by discoursing on sacred things.

As we are all strangers and pilgrims upon earth, and are travelling forward towards an eternal state, it will be wise and prudent in us to consult together (as the children of
this

this world do in temporal matters) how we may best secure the one thing needful, and make our calling and election sure. We are all by nature the same; that is, conceived and born in sin, and children of wrath. We all live in the midst of the same wicked world; and have all the same spiritual adversaries, namely, the world, the flesh, and the devil, to resist. If we are open and communicative on these subjects, we shall derive from them mutual comfort and advantage: The experience of others will be useful to ourselves; by observing their errors we may, by grace, learn to avoid them; and by imitating their virtues, we shall certainly improve our own. The Almighty, indeed, has in his word, expressly enjoined us to avoid all corrupt communication, and to abound in that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

From the sacred writings we may deduce an infinite variety of matter for religious conversation. Here you read of the creation of man in a state of innocence and happiness; and of his shameful fall by eating the forbidden fruit. Here too you are informed of the great goodness of the Almighty in promising a Redeemer, and of the actual accomplish-
ment

ment of this most gracious promise, by the incarnation, obedience and passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.— Here is described, in the most plain and familiar manner, the immaculate conduct of our Redeemer, who went about doing good, and who has given us an example that we should follow his steps. — Here too you may learn the unspeakable and infinite purity of God, whose law, (like himself) is holy, just, and good; and by comparing your conduct with this unerring rule, (not by the delusive standard of the conduct of others) you will soon be convinced (if you pray for the assistance of the holy Spirit) of your own exceeding sinfulness; and this conviction, when duly formed in your souls by the Spirit of God, will never suffer you to enjoy solid peace, till he has likewise revealed to you the righteousness of the Saviour, for your complete justification. It is the office of the holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, to take of the things of Christ, and to shew them unto his people. When he visits our souls with his Divine power, he enlightens our understandings, shews us the purity and spirituality of the moral law, and our own impurity and innumerable

merable offences against it; hence we become humble, and reject with abhorrence every refuge of lies, every self-righteous plea, and are convinced that we are poor and miserable, blind and naked.—God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble. As soon, therefore, as we can truly adopt the language of our excellent church, in the communion service, and say from the very bottom of our souls, “We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness; we do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, and the burden of them is intolerable:” When this is the case, I say, we are in the right way to a cure. All who are thus weary and heavy laden Jesus Christ calls to come unto him, and has assured them that he will give them rest—*Matt. xi. 28.* This invitation is as extensive as it is gracious: For it extends to all that are weary; toiling in a fruitless pursuit of happiness, in the things of time and sense; and spending their labour for that which satisfieth not. All that are heavy laden, oppressed with the servitude of sin, or bowed down under a load of misery. These, and all such as these are called, and have a sure promise from a

T

faithful

faithful Saviour, that he will give them rest; that is, the peace and quietness of a good conscience now, under a sure and certain hope of eternal rest in a future state.—In short, he will wash his people in that blood which atones for their sins, and invest them with that all-perfect righteousness which justifies their guilty persons, since nothing less than these mercies can afford any real satisfaction to the wounded conscience, or true comfort to the restless sinner, who is deeply convinced of his own guilt and misery. What a noble and inexhaustible subject of joy and triumph is presented to us in the person and undertaking of our Divine Immanuel!—He is perfect God and perfect Man. Hear what a most exalted and sublime description the evangelical prophet gives of Him!—"Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and he shall be called Wonderful; Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." A short comment on these words, may, I hope, tend to impress them very deeply on your hearts.

Unto us a Child is born, namely the holy Child Jesus; unto us a Son is given; that is, Jesus;

Jesus, the only begotten and well-beloved Son of the Most High God; though reputed only the Son of Joseph; he is given unto us as a Saviour, and mighty Deliverer: And "the government shall be upon his shoulder;" the government both of this world and the next, is committed to Christ; all power is given to him both in heaven and in earth: "And he shall be called wonderful." The extremes of finite and infinite, of creature and Creator, of God and man, are united in an incomprehensible manner, in his glorious person; and a series of miracles attesting his mission, and illustrating his offices, shall make him an object of wonder and delight to men and angels, through eternity; he shall be wonderful in his incarnation, wonderful in his death and passion, wonderful in his resurrection, and wonderful in his second advent; wonderful in his works and dispensations.— "Counsellor," because he was to instruct poor, ignorant, wretched, ruined transgressors (such as all men are) how they might be reconciled to their offended Maker. "The Mighty God" claiming the title and attributes peculiar to Deity, particularly that of omnipotence, on which his ability to save is founded: "The everlasting Father," existing from all eternity,

as very God, inasmuch as whosoever " hath
 " seen him hath seen the Father's " essence ;
 and standing in the covenant relation of a
 Father to his elect children. " The Prince
 " of Peace," having made peace by the blood
 of his cross, and therefore able to keep all
 those in perfect peace whose minds are stayed
 on him. Such then is the dignity of our
 Divine Redeemer. Let it be our care there-
 fore, to seek after union and communion
 with him, for without this we can neither
 have peace in life, nor hope in death. But
 if we abide in Christ, and Christ in us ; if we
 are one with Christ, and Christ with us, we
 shall rejoice to speak of his goodness, and
 gratefully acknowledge his benefits. If then
 we would approve ourselves true christians,
 we should frequently declare the dignity, and
 love the power and faithfulness of Jesus
 Christ. Such was the practice of the holy
 psalmist : He delighted to speak of the good-
 ness of the Lord, and to tell of all his wond-
 erous works. " O come hither, says he, and
 " hearken all ye that fear God ; and I will
 " tell you what he hath done for my soul"—
Psf. lxxvi. 14. And is he not both able and
 willing to do great things for us too ? Doubt-
 less he is ; for Jesus Christ is the same yester-
 day

day, to-day, and for ever.—As he is the mighty God, all things are in his power, and at his command: As he is Man, he has a tender sense and feeling of our infirmities, and knows how to have compassion on them that are weak and ignorant, and out of the way. Such was his astonishing love to poor, miserable, lost sinners, that he descended from his imperial throne, took upon him our nature, lived in poverty, and died in misery, for us men, and for our salvation. When the Saviour of mankind was born, the angels ushered him into the world with this grateful and triumphant song: Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good-will towards men. And if angels were so much rejoiced, and so thankful at the prospect of the recovery of our lost race, shall man, who is the subject of this great salvation, be sinfully silent, and unmindful of this inestimable blessing? God forbid: Rather let us join in the pious exclamation of the royal psalmist: Lord! what is man that thou art thus mindful of him, or the son of man that thou didst thus graciously vouchsafe to visit him? Indeed it is a most pleasing and profitable, a most rational and delightful employment to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to declare the wonders that

he

he doeth for the children of men.—Let it be our delightful employment frequently to do so.

Let us speak sometimes concerning the infinite purity of the Divine Nature; at others, of God's wisdom and goodness, and most of all concerning his inestimable love to us, in sending his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. The spotless example too of our ever-blessed Lord, will afford us not only a perfect rule for our imitation and observance, but likewise an ample subject for christian conversation. Discourfing on this subject, we may take notice of his early piety, and recommend it to others.—When he was only twelve years old, we find him about his father's business, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing and asking them questions—*Luke ii. 46, 47.* We may remark too, his obedience to his parents—*Luke ii. 15*; his unwearied diligence in doing good—*Acts x. 38*; his humility—*Matt. xi. 29*; self-denial, and contentment in poverty; his frequent performance of the duty of private prayer, and fasting—*Luke vi. 12*—*Mark i. 15*; his thankfulness to God—*Matt. xi. 25*; his compassion to the afflicted, both in soul and body; his holy conversation; his patience under sufferings; his readiness to forgive injuries;

juries ; his zeal for public-worship—*John ii. 17* ; his universal holiness and obedience to his father's will.

You hence learn, that the attentive consideration of our Saviour's life, will afford a variety of topics for religious discourse ; and so will his death and passion, his resurrection and ascension, his sending the comforter, (who is the Holy Ghost) whose sacred influences enlighten the understandings, enliven the affections, sanctify the hearts, and reform the lives of all real christians. These are inexhaustible subjects, and peculiarly acceptable to every serious mind. Frequently too may we converse concerning the excellence and value of the soul of man ; the folly and baseness of sin ; the beauty of holiness ; the uncertainty of life ; the certainty of death and judgment, the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell.

If we turn our thoughts from the word to the works of God, every thing, whether animate or inanimate, will furnish us with a theme.—The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. No man can want a subject for religious conversation, who does not want a will to employ his tongue in the sacred exercise ;
even

even the brute creation will afford ample matter for useful conversation: The sheep may teach us patience, the dog faithfulness, the serpent wisdom, and the dove innocence: The ant and the bee will reprove us for our sluggishness, and the ox and the ass correct us for our ignorance. In short, all created nature, and every object in it may become through the grace of God, a subject of christian conversation; and a means of conveying religious instruction. Indeed, there is no subject so barren and unprofitable, but what may be made subservient to the privilege of ministering grace to the hearers. And yet, alas! how little of this religious conversation do we meet with in the world; and how much of that corrupt communication which is utterly inconsistent with our christian profession; and strictly forbidden by the word of God! If you mix with the world promiscuously, you will frequently hear the word of God blasphemed; perhaps too, the fall of man, the divinity of Christ, the operations of the holy Spirit denied; God's word derided; and his ministers set at nought. You will hear incessant prating about the merest trifles; and sometimes such a wretched mixture of profaneness and obscenity, of falsehood and defam-

mation;

mation, as is horrible to the soul of every true believer. How very different is the conduct of a real christian ! He is desirous to converse as becometh the gospel, and therefore, takes heed to the injunctions which Moses gave the Israelites respecting *their* conversation ; which injunctions are certainly as obligatory on us as they were on the Jews. These injunctions are recorded in *Deuteronomy* vi. 6, 7. Thus it is written : “ These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart : “ And thou shalt teach them diligently unto “ thy children ; and thou shalt talk of them “ when thou sittest in thine house, and when “ thou walkest by the way, and when thou “ liest down, and when thou risest up.”— Besides, we have the greatest encouragement given us to converse in a religious manner : Hear what is said in *Mal.* iii. 16, 17.—“ Then “ they that feared the Lord, spake often one to “ another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard “ it ; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the “ Lord ; and that thought upon his name : “ And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of “ Hosts, in that day, when I make up my “ jewels ; and I will spare them as a man “ spareth his own son that serveth him.”—

U

This

This is a very striking passage, and well deserves our most serious attention: For, it contains the strongest recommendation of religious conversation. The true servants of the living God are here represented as speaking often one to another concerning their spiritual concerns. Thus it was formerly, and so it is now: For, there is no greater pleasure to real christians than to speak of the great things which God has done for their souls, in bringing them out of the gross darkness of their natural state, into the marvellous light of the gospel, and in turning them from the power of Satan, unto God. To such conversation concerning christian experience, the Lord is here said to hearken; that is, to regard it with peculiar pleasure; and not only to hearken, but to keep a book of remembrance of it, which implies, that the Almighty will always remember such pious discourse, to the honor and comfort of his faithful servants: Nay, he will eminently distinguish such persons at the great day of universal retribution: They shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; that is, I will select them for my peculiar treasure; I will honor and regard them as my own chosen people.—

Such

Such are the great and gracious promises which are made to all real christians, whose conversation is such as becometh the gospel. See then, my brethren, that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise: Redeeming the time because the days are evil.—Have no fellowship either with the unfruitful words, or works of darkness, but rather reprove them.—Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.—Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.—Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.—Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.—And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.—Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance *Phil. vi. 10, 19.* Then will you find, to your unspeakable comfort, that, as you grow in years, you will grow in grace too, and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—You will experience more and more the real comforts of true religion, for you

will be filled with all joy and peace in believing; and with all the fulness of God. In short, you will be ripening for glory as you approach the grave; and when your earthly tabernacles are dissolved, you shall have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

SECTION

it
B
fi
sh
re
Cl

aff
fid
car
tur
in
int
to
enc
Co
fide
n
onl
wh
out

SECTION XII.

Of SELF-EXAMINATION.

THE necessity of self-examination arises from the inseparable connection which it hath with a right knowledge of ourselves. Besides, God has expressly enjoined us to consider our ways; and to what end, but that we should ascertain the true state of our souls, repent of our sins, and return unto him thro' Christ.

He that would thrive in his temporal affairs, must frequently look into them, consider wherein he has acted imprudently, and carefully avoid such imprudence for the future: In like manner, he that would prosper in his spiritual concerns, must often enquire into the state of his own soul, with respect to God, his neighbor, and himself. This enquiry may be reduced to two heads: 1st, Concerning the spiritual state: 2dly, Considering his life and conversation. 1st, He must examine whether he is born again, not only of water, but of the Spirit too; that is, whether he is brought by the Spirit of God out of a state of nature, into a state of grace.

Unless

Unless we have experienced this divine change, the most scrupulous observance of all the externals and circumstantials of religion will avail nothing: This is very plainly taught us by our blessed Lord and the apostle St. Paul: The former tells us, that, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" the latter assures us, that, "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Now, when our Lord expressly declares, that we must be born again, he certainly means that our corrupt nature must be renewed and changed by the holy Spirit of God; without the experience of which great and important change, we are yet in our sins: Nay, we are at this moment in a carnal state, destitute of the Spirit of Christ, and subject to the dreadful vengeance of an offended God.

The word of God assures us, moreover, that they who are in the flesh; that is, in their natural state, cannot please God: Nay, so far from it, that the very temper and disposition of every unrenewed man, are most opposite to the Supreme Being: The carnal mind is enmity against God: It stirs up a most bitter opposition against divine things, which nothing can remove but the all-sufficient grace
of

of God in Jesus Christ. Indeed, since man is by nature shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin, it is impossible that he can truly love the all-pure and immaculate author of his being. Light and darkness are not more opposite than sin and holiness; and therefore, though the light of the gospel shines so gloriously in our land; yet, we see, alas! too many love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. The heart of man is by nature deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and what can be the product of a deceitful and wicked heart, but deceit and wickedness? This melancholy fact is confirmed, not only by daily experience, but also by the testimony of Him who is the faithful and true witness:—"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, thefts, false-witness, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Such are the accursed fruits of our original depravity; and if so, it is surely our bounden duty and interest, to pray earnestly and diligently for the Holy Spirit of God, that we may die unto sin, and live unto God.

The inward and spiritual grace in baptism, is, as we are taught by our church, a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness;

righteousness; and unless we partake of this inward and spiritual grace, it is certain that the outward sign will profit us nothing. The form of godliness cannot avail us, if we are destitute of the power thereof; it is a matter, therefore, of the utmost importance for you to enquire into the true state of your own souls. The apostle expressly enjoins you to do so; and I am sure if you have any true regard for your own salvation, you will carefully observe his injunction “to examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, and “to prove your own selves.”—Ask yourselves therefore, as in the presence of God, whether you are now in a state of nature, or in a state of grace? Whether you are either in a natural and unregenerate state, blind to the things of God, and dead in trespasses and sins; or, whether you are regenerate, and “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Nicodemus though a master, or teacher in Israel, was totally ignorant of the new birth unto righteousness; and there are too many, it is to be feared, at this day who are called christians, and yet neither know nor care about it.—It is certain, however, that all such are yet in their sins; they are only nominal, not real christians, and must, if they die unren-
 ed,

ed, and unchanged perish for ever. Take heed, therefore, that ye be not deceived.— Between an holy God, and an unholy soul, there can subsist no communion; and since all are unclean and impure, both by nature and practice, all should earnestly pray for, and diligently seek after the holy Spirit of God, whose peculiar office it is, to renew and “sanctify the elect people of God.” To do this you have the greatest encouragement, since our heavenly Father has expressly promised, that he will give his holy Spirit to them that ask it. This is a most comfortable assurance, and lays such a firm foundation for the prayer of faith, as nothing can shake or remove. Should you find upon enquiry; therefore, that you are yet unconverted, there is no reason why you should despair: but the greatest reason why you should instantly resolve to rest no longer in so dreadful a state, but earnestly seek after the sacred influences of Divine Grace, which are so fully and freely promised to you in the gospel. Let me advise you, therefore, as soon as you are inwardly convinced that you are still in your natural state, immediately to retire into your chamber, and there commune with your own heart by self-examination; seriously reflect on

X

your

your miserable condition; meditate attentively on these words: "Ye must be born again;" and then plead in faith, by earnest and humble prayer for the gift of God's holy Spirit. Pursue this method, and you will soon perceive an evident and great change: God is more ready to hear than we to pray, and is wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; and if we draw nigh unto him, he will draw nigh unto us: Thousands know this by happy experience. May you too be enabled by the Spirit of God, to know it for yourself, and then you will be ready to set to your seal that God is true.—He cannot deceive us with vain hopes, and if we have not his holy Spirit, it is because we do not seek after it in the way he has appointed; that is, through faith, and in earnest, fervent, and humble prayer. Ask, therefore, for the influences of the comforter, in the name of Jesus Christ, and they shall doubtless be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. And observe, for your encouragement, the following declaration: Every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.—Make, therefore, the experiment in the way before directed: Pray first for, and then in faith;

faith; plead this blessed promise with earnestness and perseverance, and be assured you shall not be sent empty away. Remember, that heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than one jot or tittle of God's word can fail. Seeking, therefore, earnestly and diligently in this manner, you will most assuredly receive the holy Spirit of God. And when this divine Comforter takes possession of your soul, you will soon find a most wonderful alteration.—The eyes of your understanding will then be enlightened to know God, and to know yourself. You will then perceive that God is an infinite, eternal, and incomprehensible Spirit; and that he has all perfections in and of himself. With respect to yourself, you will discern that you are by nature a child of wrath, by practice a child of disobedience, and therefore justly liable to the Divine vengeance.

When you have been deeply convinced both of your original and actual depravity, the Comforter will then take of the things of Christ, and shew them unto you; and you will hereby clearly know the inestimable blessings which are freely given you of God in Christ. You will perceive, what before you were totally ignorant of: that Christ is of God, made unto you wisdom, righteousness,

ness, sanctification, and redemption—1 *Cor.* i. 30. When the Spirit of God takes possession of your soul, he will not only remove your natural blindness and ignorance, respecting divine things, but he will likewise rectify and change your crooked and perverse will. God's people are made a willing people in the day of his power. The mind of every true christian is regulated according to the rule of God's word, and brought into a conformity to the Divine will; and when this is the case, he can truly say to God, Not my will, but thine be done. Hence there follows too, a great change in the affections of the soul: They are no longer enslaved by the things of time and sense, but are fully and firmly fixed on the great and glorious God, and on his Son Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

When the Believer has once acquired a true heart-felt sense of God's unspeakable love to him, through Christ, in the great work of redemption: When he sees the inexpressible kindness and compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ, in redeeming him from all iniquity, and delivering him from eternal condemnation, the sure and certain consequence of this conviction, is love unfeigned, together with sincere obedience. We love him, says the apostle,

apostle, because he first loved us : To all who thus know, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is precious indeed ; he is the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. When this renovating change has taken place in the soul of a real christian, it will infallibly produce a great and suitable change in his life and conversation. This is the second point to be enquired into by every one who is in earnest about his salvation ; namely, whether his life and conversation are such as are agreeable to the gospel of Christ ; if they are, he may be very certain that he is born of God, and is passed from death unto life ; if they are not, his religion is nothing but delusion, and will answer no other end but to deceive himself and ruin his own soul. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.—When, therefore, the heart is cleansed from its pollutions, by the holy Spirit of God, and renewed by his sanctifying influences, an exemplary and holy conversation is sure to follow. When the tree is made good, its fruits will be good of course. Here then we have an infallible test to try the state of our own souls. Consider seriously your own ways, and examine carefully into your manner of living : if your spiritual condition is changed, your
life

life will be so too. There will necessarily be a change not only in your thoughts and apprehensions, in your wills and desires, but likewise in your companions, in your customs, and in the whole of your conversation. This change will be so great, that it will be discernible, not only by yourself, but evident to others: For, if you are truly converted, your light will so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Whilst you were in your unconverted state, you walked according to the course of this world, and were influenced by that apostate spirit who now worketh in the children of disobedience; but now being under the conduct of the divine Spirit of God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end will be everlasting life.

Sanctification or holiness, both of heart and life, is a sure evidence of real christianity, and is a mark of our adoption into the family of heaven, and the household of faith; try yourself therefore, diligently, by the rule of God's word; examine whether it be your sincere desire, and hearty endeavour, through grace, to conform to its injunctions; for, remember, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. If then you live in the wilful and habitual

habitual omission of any known duty, or the wilful and habitual commission of any known sin, it is then certain, that you are the slave of Satan, and not the Son of God. He that wilfully committeth sin, is of the devil, whatever he may pretend; but he that is born of God, sinneth not habitually, neither can he, because the Spirit of God governs his heart.

You may learn then, from what has been advanced, the necessity and importance of the great duty of self-examination. It is so necessary, that unless you frequently use it, you can never know the true state of your souls; and so important, that if you neglect it, your negligence of it will be punished, if you repent not, with death eternal—a most awful consideration this!—May we all duly consider it, and so judge ourselves here, that we may not finally be judged; that is, condemned of the Lord for ever.

The duty of self-examination ought to be our daily practice; we ought every day to be seriously enquiring how matters stand betwixt God and our souls. In a more particular manner it is enjoined, before we approach the holy table of the Lord. This is the apostle's express command: “ Let a man examine
“ himself,

“ himself, and so let him eat of that bread; “ and drink of that cup.” Our church, in conformity to this injunction; expressly requires her members to do so; and clearly states the particulars in which this examination should consist. It is required of all those who purpose to receive the holy sacrament; to examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins; stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; whether they have a lively faith in God’s mercies, through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and are in charity with all men:

As the season of the Lord’s supper now approacheth, I earnestly entreat all who intend to partake of it, deeply and seriously to consider these most important points. Search and try your own ways diligently, that you may truly repent of all you have done amiss; and turn again to the Lord. If you neglect or disregard this advice, and go on in a trifling, careless and unthinking way, you must surely suffer for it. God is a Searcher of hearts, and cannot be imposed upon by mere pretences. He positively requires and insists upon the heart; and unless this be given up to him to be renewed by the Spirit of Christ, and cleansed by his blood, all is vain. God is a Spirit,
and

and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Bodily exercise profiteth nothing, without the devotion of the heart; and the most pompous externals of religion will surely be rejected by him, unless in our attendance on them, we are actuated by a principle of genuine love to God, of faith in the Redeemer, and universal benevolence of our fellow-creatures for his sake. Consider seriously what has been said, and may God enable you all, by his Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ, duly to profit by it!

Y

SECTION

SECTION XIII.

Of the LORD'S SUPPER.

THE sacrament of the Lord's supper was ordained by our Saviour Jesus Christ, to keep up the remembrance of his death and passion, and to seal to his faithful followers, all the benefits flowing therefrom. The night in which he was betrayed, he took bread, and when he had blessed; he brake it, and gave to his disciples, saying, Take, eat this is my body, which is given for you: Likewise, after supper, he took the cup, and when he had given thanks; he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; do this as oft as ye shall drink it in remembrance of me.—Such is the account which we find in scripture, concerning the institution of the holy sacrament; and in conformity to this account, our church tells us, that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby. Our blessed Lord knew perfectly

fectly what was in man ; he knew the depravity and deceit of the human heart ; the carelessness and ingratitude of mankind, and how apt they are to forget even their God and Saviour ; their greatest Friend, and kindest Benefactor.—He appointed this sacred ordinance, therefore, out of pure love to our souls, to remind us of our immense obligations to him for laying down his life for us.

If we consider the dreadful state of man after the fall of Adam, we shall soon be convinced of the great need he had of a Saviour, and of the inestimable blessing of redemption. As soon as our first parents had transgressed the Divine Commandment by eating the forbidden fruit, they forfeited the Divine Favour, and became subject to the dreadful sentence threatened to his disobedience : In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. This sentence implied not only the death of the body by the loss of life, but likewise the death of the soul by the loss of God's Image, together with the death of both body and soul together, by eternal punishment in hell.

Such was the import of the Divine threatening, as clearly appears by various passages in the word of God ; nor did our first parent injure himself alone by his disobedience : No,

he ruined not only himself, but also his posterity. He was the representative and root of all mankind; and it is certain that they sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.

Thus we are told, that in Adam all die; and that, by the offence of one, (that is, of Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation.—Indeed, the dreadful consequences of Adam's fall, are found by woeful experience, to extend to all his descendants at this day. Hence it is that our understandings are so wretchedly darkened respecting Divine truths; our wills so crooked and perverse; our affections so alieated from God, and the things of God, and so rivetted to the world. In short, hence it is that we are all so wretchedly prone to evil, and averse to good. And if such is our natural state, what great and inexpressible need have we for a Saviour, to fulfil the law for us, to redeem us from its dreadful curse, and to bring us into a state of grace and favour with God? And how gratefully should we remember, how frequently and thankfully should we tell of all the wondrous works which our Redeemer has performed for us men, and for our salvation?

The

The outward part, or sign of the Lord's supper, is bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received. This evidently appears by the form of institution already mentioned; and the outward part, or thing signified, is the body and blood of Christ, which are spiritually taken, and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper; that is, all who rightly receive this holy sacrament, with a true penitent heart, and with a lively faith, do partake of that great sacrifice which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ offered up on the cross for the sins of the whole world, and of all the benefits which he thereby purchased, in order to the pardon of their sins, the justification and sanctification of their persons, and their complete salvation. The benefits then, whereof we are partakers, are very many and great; for, as our church informs us, our souls are hereby strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine. As the elements of bread and wine convey vital nourishment and strength to the body, so when we receive Christ in the Lord's supper, we derive from him spiritual strength to renew the combat against our spiritual enemies;

enemies ; to grow in grace, and to triumph against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

If we would know what are the requisites for a due participation of this sacred feast, our church has very clearly and fully informed all her members : They are required to examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, and stedfastly purpose to lead a new life ; whether they have a lively faith in God's mercies through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death ; and whether they are in charity with all men.

Let us briefly examine these particulars : 1st, He that intends to approach the Lord's table, must carefully examine himself whether he repents truly of his former sins ; that is, whether he is deeply sensible both of his original and actual sins : For, unless he is fully convinced by the holy Spirit of God, of his own blindness and unworthiness, he never can nor will earnestly seek after Jesus Christ, who is the great physician of souls. Indeed, a true repentance implies neither more nor less than an heart-felt sorrow for sin, a perfect hatred of it, together with a firm and full resolution (through the power of God's grace) of entirely forsaking it. But, let us remember, that this repentance is not the work of man ; it is
not

not attainable by the exercise of any of our natural faculties and powers : but it is the free gift of our God and Saviour, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour ; and observe, for what end : To give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. Seek it, therefore, in earnest and humble prayer, and the Lord will most assuredly give it you. Then will you have the first great requisite for a due approach to the Lord's table.

2. The second thing required, is a steadfast purpose to lead a new life.—This is inseparably connected with the former : Indeed, it is impossible to repent truly of our former sins, without steadfastly purposing to lead a new life. All who are truly penitent, may justly say in the words of our excellent church, that “ the remembrance of their “ sins is grievous unto them, and the burden of them is intolerable.”—It is impossible, then, for any person who repeats this humble confession, from the heart, to think of continuing in any known sin ? Surely it is not ! On the contrary, he presents himself, his soul, and body, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God : How then can he wilfully do any wickedness, and sin against him ? It cannot be.

3. A

3. A third requisite to a due participation of the Lord's supper, is a lively faith in God's mercies through Christ.—This faith is also wrought in us by the power of God : For, it is expressly called in scripture, “ faith of the “ operation of God ;” and it is his gracious and free gift. This genuine and true faith is very different from what usually passes under this name ; namely, the faith of education and custom : The former is lively and active, and produces a most plentiful increase of good works ; the latter is dead and ineffectual, and entirely destitute of the life and power of godliness. The former worketh by love, and produces the good fruits of the Spirit ; the latter is barren and unprofitable ; it is like the faith of devils, who believe and tremble, but are entirely destitute of all good. You see then, what a great and amazing difference there is betwixt a true and a false faith : They are as opposite as light and darkness ; as life and death. Examine yourself, therefore, whether you are in the faith ; prove your own selves. In short, a true faith in Christ, implies a lively and active dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ, to receive from him wisdom, to enlighten our dark understandings ; righteousness, to justify our guilty persons ; sanctification,

tion, or real holiness both in heart and life, together with redemption, which includes an exemption, both from the guilt and the power of sin, together with advancement to eternal happiness. Happy are the people who are in such a case; yea, blessed are all such people; for, they and they only have the Lord for their God.

4. A fourth requisite to a due participation of the Lord's supper, is a thankful remembrance of his death.—And sure, if we reflect on our original guilt and actual transgressions, and seriously consider the dreadful vengeance which is due to us on this account, we cannot but discern our infinite need of a Saviour, and our own unspeakable obligations to Christ for dying to redeem us.

If God had not provided an all-sufficient Saviour for fallen man, we all must have been miserable for ever. This consideration alone will be sufficient (if we have the least spark of grace) to fill our souls with the most ardent gratitude to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the inestimable blessing of redemption, by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ. This holy gratitude will be in a great measure its own reward; for, all who possess

Z

it;

it, know by happy experience, that it is indeed; a joyful and pleasant thing to be thankful.

5. A fifth requisite to a due receiving of the Lord's supper, is to be in charity with all men.—It is the express commandment of Jesus Christ, that we should love one another; and unless we do so he will not own us as his disciples. It is indispensably necessary therefore, that the receivers of the holy communion should be in charity with all men, because it is a feast of love, and a communion of christians one with another, and signifies their conjunction in one spiritual body; that is, in the church, which is the body of Christ, of which He is the Head.

To be in charity with all men, is to forgive all men their offences against us, as sincerely as we ourselves desire to be forgiven by God: It is to pray to God to forgive them in the same manner, and be ready to do them all the offices of humanity and charity; (which are reasonable in themselves, and consistent with our duties in life) as heartily as if they never offended us. We never can approve ourselves as the children of our heavenly Father, and the disciples of the compassionate Redeemer, unless we have unfeigned love one towards another. God is love, and every one that
is

is born of God abideth in love. In short, love is the fulfilling of the law, and by this we have an infallible token that we have passed from death unto life, if we unfeignedly love the brethren.

The requisites for a due approach to the Lord's table, then, are true repentance, a steadfast purpose of new obedience, a lively faith in God's mercies thro' Christ, a thankful remembrance of his death, and charity with all men.

Examine carefully whether you are possessed of these requisites; if you are, then may you safely approach the Lord's table, and will find the greatest comfort in so doing; if you are not, rest no longer in so dangerous a condition, but earnestly seek the Lord whilst he may be found, and call upon him whilst he is near; then shall you assuredly know, if you follow on to know the Lord; draw right unto God in humble and fervent prayer, and he will certainly draw nigh unto you. The holy Spirit of God will convince you of your sins, and make you truly humble for them; and then will you come as sinners weary and heavy laden to Jesus Christ, who is the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. When this conviction is truly wrought in your souls,

and you have a firm faith in Christ, and a true hunger and thirst after righteousness, you will then be desirous to approach the Lord's table.

This is the indispensable duty of every christian; Christ expressly commands it: Do this, says he, in remembrance of me—no words can be plainer than these; they call for no comment; they require no explanation. And yet, alas! how shamefully is this holy ordinance neglected by many among us? As totally neglected as if there were no such command in the bible. I request, however, that you will most seriously consider the dreadful situation which your souls are in by this criminal neglect. You hereby despise the symbols of that spiritual nourishment which your God and Saviour has provided for his people; you trample under foot the riches of Divine grace; you wilfully disobey your Lord's plain, and positive, nay, his dying command. How then can you escape the severest condemnation, if you continue in your disobedience, and wilfully neglect so great salvation? Christ is the bread of life, and your souls can no more be supported without an interest in him, and union with him by faith, than your bodies can be supported without
out

out necessary food; nay, the Redeemer has most solemnly assured you, that except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.—It is true, these words were spoken before the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper was instituted; yet, you may clearly learn from them, that unless you feed on Christ, by the exercise of a true and spiritual faith, though your bodies are healthy and strong, yet that your souls are destitute of all true and spiritual life, and must abide and continue under the power of darkness, and the dominion both of spiritual and eternal death. Indeed, we are all depraved by nature, and dead in trespasses and sins; Christ, therefore, must purify our corrupt nature, and renew our wicked hearts by the sanctifying influences of his holy Spirit, before we can either know or perform the things which belong to our eternal peace. The influences of this Spirit are usually vouchsafed to christians whilst they are under the means of grace. The ordinance of the Lord's supper is one of the chief of these means, and therefore, in the name of the most high God, I most solemnly conjure and charge you not to neglect it.—Remember, if you do not use the means of religion, you cannot hope to obtain
the

the end which is the salvation of your souls ; on the contrary, you have the greatest reason to expect, that if you thus wilfully disobey your Lord's dying command, turn your back on his sacred table, and are, as it were, ashamed of him, that he, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, will disown and condemn you ; that he will be ashamed of you ; and that he will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. These are awful considerations ; may you all instantly attend to them ! for, they are as true as they are awful. It is true you may, like the Jews of old, (when invited to the marriage feast of the King's son) amuse yourselves, and deceive others with vain excuses ; but remember, and well consider the dreadful issue : None of those despisers of God's Son were permitted to share in the blessings of the gospel ; as certainly will you be excluded from the salvation which Christ has purchased for sinners, if you wilfully continue to disobey his dying command. Consider in time what plea you can make at the judgment-seat of Christ, for your criminal omission. What will you ; nay, what can you urge in defence of this shameful neglect ? You cannot say that you do not know it is your duty, for the bible tells you
most

most plainly that it is.—You cannot plead that you want opportunity ; for, in this parish, you have, at least, a monthly opportunity of approaching the Lord's table.—You cannot plead that you want instruction concerning the nature of it ; for, if you can read, there is in this favoured land, a variety of excellent treatises on the subject : But, if you cannot read, and wish to be instructed ; or are under any particular doubts or scruples respecting it, I desire and entreat you will come to me, and I will faithfully endeavour (by the Divine assistance) to inform the ignorance of such as are uninstructed, and to satisfy the doubts, and remove the scruples of such as are weak or wavering.—This is my bounden duty, as your pastor, and I trust, that I can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, and truly say, that I am willing and desirous to discharge it. Remember, that wilful ignorance is as certainly a grievous sin, as wilful lying, swearing, drunkenness, or sabbath-breaking, and such ignorance will, if you continue in it, be certainly fatal to your souls. My people, says God, are destroyed for lack of knowledge. And if your souls are in danger of eternal destruction, through want of spiritual knowledge, will you, dare you to
trifle

trifle still, and continue any longer in this sinful and dangerous condition? God forbid! I am sure, if you have a true regard for your souls, you will in all doubtful cases, be glad to seek the law at your pastor's mouth, and you will never be easy in a dark and heathenish state; on the contrary, you will call earnestly and faithfully upon God, for the assistance of his grace, that you may awake from your spiritual slumbers, and arise from the death of sin, unto the life of righteousness, when Christ shall give you light. Then will you find, as thousands have done before you, that in a due use of the means of grace, you shall be made partakers of the hope of glory. —Christ, the true Sun of Righteousness, will arise, and shine into your benighted souls, with healing in his wings; he will remove your spiritual maladies, and by his divine ordinances, and teachings, will gently and safely lead you in the way wherein you should go. In short, he will guide you with his counsel here, and will hereafter receive you into glory.

SECTION

SECTION XIV.

Of Fasting.

THE duty of fasting was expressly enjoined the Jews by the Almighty, in the old testament. The children of Israel were commanded to keep the tenth day of the 7th month, which was the great day of atonement, as a solemn fast. In *Leviticus* xvi. xxiii. you have a particular account of the order and manner of doing this. On this solemn day the people lamented, and mourned, wept and bewailed their former sins; and whosoever did not humble his soul, bewail his sins, and abstain from all food until the evening, that soul, saith the Almighty, shall be destroyed from among my people. It does not appear that Moses ordained any days of public fasting, more than the day before named; it is certain, however, that the Jews had more times of fasting: These are mentioned in *Zechariah* viii. viz. The fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth. However, since it does not clearly appear in the law when they were instituted, it is to be

A a

supposed

supposed that they were observed among the Jews, by the appointment of their governors, and were rather to be esteemed as a matter of voluntary humiliation, and self-denial, than of express injunction.

It may be presumed, that in consequence of these general fasts, good men took occasion to appoint to themselves private fasts, at such times as they were struck with a deep sense of their sins, and gave themselves up to fervent prayer, that it would please the Almighty to avert his anger from them. This contrition of heart they expressed by their external behaviour: they put on sack-cloth; they sprinkled ashes on their heads, and sat, or lay prostrate on the ground.

We hence learn in what manner this duty of fasting was observed under the Jewish dispensation: Let us now consider how it was established by our blessed Lord in the new testament. Indeed, our Saviour has recommended this duty both by his precept and by his example too. When the disciples of John, instigated by the Pharisees, came to Christ with an ensnaring question, Why his disciples fasted not, (intimating hereby that whosoever did not fast, was not of God) our Lord, in answer to them, does not altogether deny

deny the necessity of this duty, but only excuse his disciples from the *immediate* observance of it, because He, the Bridegroom of his church, was then with them: Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast—*Matt. ix. 15.* In this text our Lord declares, that after his removal into glory, his disciples, or the professors of his religion, should practise the Duty of fasting. Nay, he not only enjoins this duty, but also lays down particular rules for the due regulation of it—See *Matt. vi. 16, 17, 18.*

From hence it evidently appears, that fasting is a duty enjoined not only under the law, but likewise under the gospel. And I shall now further observe, that our Lord has instructed us to do so by his own example.—He for our sakes fasted forty days and forty nights. It is certainly therefore, meet and right, and our bounden duty, that we should all use such abstinence, that the flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever be ready to obey his godly motions, in righteousness and true holiness. This habitual abstinence is recommended by the practice of St. Paul,

A a 2

who

who expressly tells us, that he kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, lest by any means when he had preached unto others he himself should be a cast-away.

You may learn then, from the practice of the Jews, under the old testament, and our blessed Lord and his apostles in the new, that the duty of fasting is generally necessary for all. I purpose, therefore, briefly to shew you 1st, What are the grounds, motives, and arguments to enforce the duty: And, 2dly, The ends to which fasting is directed, that it may be a good work, pleasing to God, and profitable to ourselves: First let us enquire into the reasons and uses of fasting.

1. First, It is a very natural expression of sorrow. Indeed, it is usual when persons are in great grief, to neglect themselves and lose all relish for their usual refreshments and comforts. This is a common case, when under the pressure of temporal calamities, and the same effect will, in general, be produced by spiritual distress. For, when good men feel in themselves the heavy burden of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, and behold with the eye of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart for their offences, and cannot but accuse themselves,
and

and open this their grief unto Almighty God, and call upon him for mercy. This being done seriously, their mind is so occupied partly with sorrow and heaviness; partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that all desire of meat and drink is laid apart, and loathsomeness of all worldly things, and pleasure cometh in place, so that nothing is more natural than to weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behaviour of body to shew themselves weary of this life. Thus did David fast when he made intercession to Almighty God, for the child's life, begotten in adultery of Bathsheba, Uriah's wife.—King Ahab fasted after this sort, when it repented him of murdering Naboth, bewailing his own sinful doings. Such was the Ninevites, fast brought to repentance by Jonah's preaching. When forty thousand of the Israelites were slain in battle against the Benjamites, the scripture saith, all the children of Israel, and the whole multitude of the people went to Bethel, and sat there weeping before the Lord, and fasted all that day till night—*Judges xx.* So did Daniel, Esther, Nehemiah, and many others named in the scripture fast.—(See the former part of the homily concerning fasting.)

2. Secondly,

2. Secondly, fasting is a very fit exercise of revenge against ourselves, for our former sensual indulgencies: Hereby we acknowledge ourselves unworthy, not only of those spiritual blessings which God bestows on his peculiar people, but likewise of the common necessities of life. When we are once truly convinced of our unworthiness, we shall be ready to acknowledge that we have forfeited every claim even to our daily bread; and that we are not worthy to receive even the least of God's mercies on our own account. Such an humble sense of our own sinfulness, is sure to accompany a true religious fast, and if we are destitute of this, though our fasting may secure to us the applause and commendation of men, yet it is sure to be abhorred and rejected of God: For, whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Let us be careful, therefore, to take the prophet Joel's advice, to rend our hearts, and not our garments; that is, to offer to God on these solemn occasions, the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart; our sorrow must be inward, and not in outward shew only. But above all it is requisite that we earnestly pray to God for the assistance of his grace, to cleanse

cleanse our hearts from sin, and then direct our fasting to its proper ends.—These ends remain yet to be considered: First, that we may reduce our sensual appetites to the government of right reason, and religion.—Every person who will look carefully into his own breast, will soon discover a great contrariety between the dictates of his reason, and the cravings of his appetites. This repugnancy was introduced by the fall of our first parents, and can only be effectually subdued by the mighty works of God's holy Spirit.—Fasting is however an excellent means to effect this desirable end; it withdraws that fuel to our vices, which indolence, luxury, and fulness of bread are apt to minister.

A second end of fasting is, that we may be more earnest and fervent in prayer.—Luxurious living, occasioning an inaptitude to spiritual exercises, and our bodies, when replete with food, are often found a great clog to our souls. To remove these complaints, fasting is the proper remedy: Undigested fumes are hereby carried off and the soul is rendered more active and lively, in its ascent towards heaven.

Hence it is that we so often find that fasting and prayer are joined together in the word

word of God.—Hence too, fasting made a part of devotion on all extraordinary occasions. When Moses received the law; when Elijah was admitted to a nearer approach to God, they both fasted for forty days; and our blessed Lord after his baptism, vouchsafed to enter upon his prophetic office in the same manner.—It is certain that he had no failings to lament, no rebellious lusts to subdue: but, though in these respects he could not, yet did he not disdain, in the quality of a suppliant to his father, to fast as our pattern.—We are informed too, in the acts of the apostles, that the prophets and teachers that were in Antioch, both fasted and prayed before they sent forth Paul and Barnabas to preach the gospel; so did they when they commended to God by their earnest prayers the churches that were at Antioch, Pisidia, Iconium, and Lystra—*Acts* xiii. 14.

You have now seen what are the due ends of fasting; and it is certain, that when this duty is rightly performed; when it is used with faith and prayer, it is truly acceptable unto God, as appears from our Lord's declaration to his disciples, who asked him, why they could not expel the evil spirit, which had taken possession of a certain person who
was

was brought unto them : This kind, says he, goeth not out but by prayer and fasting : Indeed, the great efficacy of fasting, when rightly performed, is very apparent, from divers facts recorded in holy scripture. When God had declared his vengeance against Ahab and his family, for murdering Naboth; and seizing his vineyard, Ahab rent his clothes, and put sack-cloth upon his flesh, and *fasted*, and lay in sack-cloth, and went softly : And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite saying, seeest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me ? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days ; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house—i *Kings* xxi. 27, 28, 29. We have here a striking evidence to the nature of that humiliation, which produces fasting, and recommends the practice of it, with an humble and sorrowful sense of our own vileness, without which the external form cannot avail.

We have another strong recommendation in favour of it, in the case of the Ninevites : —God had declared by his prophet Jonah, that the whole city of Nineveh should be destroyed in forty days. The people of Nineveh

B b

believed

believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sack-cloth, from the greatest even to the least of them. Observe now the happy consequence of this solemn humiliation? God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not—*Jonah* ii. 10. You see then, that we have the greatest encouragement given us in scripture, to observe the duty of fasting. In our public fasts let us use all possible solemnity—in our private fasts all possible secrecy. Let us hate, abhor, and avoid the pride and ostentation of the Pharisees, who fasted, and prayed, to be seen of men. If like them we only seek the applause of the world, in our religious performances, it is certain that we shall, like them too, be rejected for our vanity and hypocrisy. Whilst we are in this miserable and uncertain state, we must expect frequent calls to the exercise of solemn humiliation.—God sometimes afflicts a whole nation for their sins, with war, with famine, and with pestilence; with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death.—When this is the case, the inhabitants of such a nation are loudly called upon to observe a season

season of public humiliation, and fasting.—Without this they have no reason to expect a removal of the Divine judgments, but rather an increase of them.

In our private capacities God often visits us with various calamities.—Sometimes we are troubled in our minds, and are ready to sink into despondency, under a sense of our own sinfulness.—At others we are afflicted by the loss of friends, and goods, by long and various bodily diseases, and sometimes by such as bring us near unto the borders of the grave.

When we are thus heavily afflicted either in a public or private capacity——when the judgments of God are thus abroad in the earth; and we are thus suffering under his afflicting hand, it is then more especially meet and right, and our bounden duty, that we should learn righteousness; that we should be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; that our laughter should be turned into heaviness, and our joy into mourning: And if we thus heavily humble ourselves in the sight of God, he will, for his dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, lift us up, and receive us again into his favour. God is gracious and merciful, and of

great mercy to all that call upon him, and seek for acceptance through the Redeemer. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.—If we draw nigh unto him with penitent and obedient hearts, fully confiding in his infinitely tender mercies through Jesus Christ, he will certainly draw nigh unto us. Having therefore, this gracious promise, this reviving expectation, be careful to observe, and practise the advice given you in the name of God by the prophet Isaiah. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes : Cease to do evil—learn to do well—seek judgment—relieve the oppressed—judge the fatherless—plead for the widow, Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool —*Isaiah* i. 16, 17, 18. Is not this (saith the Almighty) the fast that I have chosen ? To loose the bands of wickedness—to undo the heavy burdens—to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke ? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to

to thy house? When thou seest the naked,
that thou cover him, and that thou hide
not thyself from thine own flesh? Then
shall thy light break forth as the morning;
then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall
answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say,
Here I am—*Isaiah* lviii. 6, 7, 8.

SECTION

SECTION XV.

*An ADDRESS to the IGNORANT PROFESSOR,
the NOTORIOUS SINNER, and the PROUD
FORMALIST.*

I. **F**IRST let me address myself to the ignorant professor of religion. You, alas! are almost, if not altogether ignorant of what above all things it concerns you most to know. Indeed, you are the greatest object of pity, for (whilst you continue wilfully ignorant) you are in a truly dangerous state, and are yet, perhaps, quite insensible of it. God has made you a reasonable creature; his providence has placed you in a christian land; he has blessed you with the means of instruction; with opportunities of promoting his glory, and of seeking salvation through Jesus Christ. These are great talents; happy privileges; and remember, you will be strictly accountable either for the use or the abuse of them: And if this be the case, how shall you escape when God calls you into judgment? You stand all the day idle; you neglect the improvement of your time, and the care of your immortal soul. Unless you know the will of
God,

God, you never can do it; and how can you possibly know it whilst you continue in the darkness of your natural state, and wilfully neglect perhaps all the means of instruction? And if you neither know God's will, nor do it. what, Oh what! must become of you when you die? Alas! you may see your own sentence plainly recorded by Jesus Christ in his holy gospel.—“Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”—*Matt.* xxv. 30. O consider this, all ye that forget God, and know not Jesus Christ whom he has sent, lest he pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you. Pray instantly and earnestly for the holy Spirit of God, to lead you into all truth; if you can read, search the scriptures diligently; if you cannot, be extremely careful to attend public-worship, to consult your spiritual guide, or to converse with experienced christians, and be assured, that in a due use of these means, God will surely remove that thick and gross darkness which now rests on your minds, and enable you clearly to see the things that belong unto everlasting peace, before they are hid from your eyes. Christ the Sun of Righteousness will arise, and shine into your benighted souls; he

he will heal all your spiritual maladies, and give you light and comfort, peace and joy.

II. I proceed now to address myself, secondly, to the open and notorious sinner.—You, it too plainly appears, are a rebel against the mighty God; you affront and despise your great and gracious Creator; you trample upon his holy laws, and disregard his Son, and disobey his gospel. It is certain, therefore, that you are, at this moment, in the very gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. You are the slave of satan; the servant of sin; and (without a true and unfeigned repentance) the sure and certain heir of eternal damnation. You treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. But, why will you die? Stop, O stay a while, and consider where you are, what you are doing, and whither you are running. Ask yourself seriously, the following questions:—Is it appointed unto me once to die? Must I, after this, come to judgment? Does an eternity either of happiness or misery await me beyond the grave? Am I prepared for my departure, and ready to meet my God? If not, who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Who can endure the worm that dieth not, and the fire that never will

will be quenched? Most awful considerations these: Remember, the wages of sin, of every sin, is death: How complicated then, is your guilt? How dreadful, your misery!—God commands you to do no murder: But, notwithstanding this prohibition, you are guilty of the most dreadful suicide; you are taking the most effectual way to murder, to ruin, and destroy both your soul and body for ever. Hear and tremble at the irreverfible decree of heaven: “The wicked fhall be turned into hell, and the people that forget God”—*Pſ.* ix. 17. If you ſaw a man ſleeping on the top of a maſt in a moſt dreadful ſtorm, would you not tremble for him, leſt the ocean ſhould ſwallow him up? Or, if you beheld another hanging by a ſlender cord, over a fiery furnace, and expecting every moment to drop into it, would you not unfeignedly commiſerate his caſe, and feel for his danger? Doubtleſs you would, if you are not entirely devoid of every benevolent ſentiment, and of every humane impreſſion. But know thou, impenitent ſinner, and tremble at the thought, that thy immortal ſoul, even thine, is in a much more dangerous ſituation, than the bodies of thoſe men before repreſented.—Should the former fall into the ſea, and the

into the flames, their sufferings, tho' sharp, would (if prepared for death) soon be ended, and they would enter into endless joy. On the contrary, should you die in your sins, (which God forbid!) your better part, your soul, your precious and immortal soul (which is of infinitely more value than the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them) must sink into everlasting misery. You now stand on the very brink of ruin, and eternal damnation: Remember, that this declaration is not the effect of an uncharitable censure, but is founded on the veracity of God's holy word. —It is intended as a kind warning to prevent your eternal destruction: Take heed, therefore, that you do not slight or disregard it. On the contrary, may you begin to reflect seriously on your dreadful situation, and consider your latter end! Pray earnestly to God for help; be deeply humbled before him; seek diligently for an interest in Jesus Christ, and your soul shall live. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world! Search the scriptures with prayer, and then you will soon discern, through the light of God's Spirit, the things which belong to your everlasting peace. You will be all taught of God, that, in the Lord Jesus Christ
all

all fulness dwells; and, if you obtain an interest in him by that faith, (which is of the operation of God) though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool—*Isa. i. 18.* Repent therefore, and be converted; believe the gospel, and rest assured that your sins shall be blotted out. God will no more remember them, either to your rejection in this world, or to your condemnation in the next.

Having therefore such exceeding great and precious promises made you in the word of God, will you, dare you to be so horribly ungrateful and vile as to continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! Rather let it be your care, instantly to fly to Christ for shelter, from the wrath to come; lay aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset you; and give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.

III. I proceed now to address myself 3dly, to the mere *Formalist*.—By the formal professor of christianity, I mean, such an one as retains the outward shew, or form of godliness, who is punctual and exact in the externals of religion, but is at the same time entirely destitute of the vital power of it.—

This man attends the means of grace which is certainly right; but then he either rests, or trusts in them, which is evidently wrong.—He is an utter stranger both to the depravity of his nature, and to his actual vileness; to the purity and spirituality of God's law, and to a work of grace on his own heart. He robs God of his honour, and Christ of his glory, he “sacrifices to his own net, and burns incense to his own drag”—*Hab. i. 16.* But alas! what horrible folly, and impiety is this? How can you think of gaining heaven by any righteousness and merit of your own? When you have done all that is commanded you, (if it were possible) still remember, that you are but an unprofitable servant; and if so, what reward can you possibly expect, on your own account? Indeed, since the fall of Adam, no man ever was, or can be justified by the deeds of the law; for, even “the just shall live by faith.” You may dream of attaining a legal righteousness; but a delusory dream you will at last find it.—You may fancy (like the church of Laodicea) that you are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; that is, you may think yourself good enough; that you have enriched yourself in spirituals, by your own strength,

strength, wisdom, and virtue; consequently, that you have no need of imploring earnestly a share in the pardoning mercy of God, and in the redemption which is in Jesus Christ. Thus do you imagine that your spiritual condition is very prosperous and happy. But, how different is the account given of your condition by the Searcher of hearts, by the faithful and true Witness, by him who cannot lie? Hear the Redeemer's own words. Instead of being rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing, he assures you that you are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"—*Rev. iii. 17*. That is, you are in a carnal and unregenerate state, under the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law, without the knowledge of Christ, unable to help yourself, blind to spiritual things, and destitute of every real and desirable blessing. Such then is your real state, and a most shocking and deplorable state it is. May God in his infinite mercy open the eye of your understanding immediately, and convince you fully of the great danger you are in! You neither know God nor yourself. You are ignorant of his immaculate holiness, and blind to your own sins. Hence you form very erroneous opinions both concerning God
and

and yourself; and think that your souls are in a safe condition, whilst you stand on the very brink of eternal torments. Think, O think in due time, what will become of your immortal soul, if you should still retain your delusion, and live and die with a lye in your right hand; if you should continue thus basely and ungratefully to neglect Christ, and rest the hope of your acceptance with God, either wholly or in part, on the foundation of your own works? Be assured, that whilst you are destitute of true humility, ignorant of Christ, and think so highly of yourself, you build your eternal hopes, not on Jesus Christ, who is the Rock of all ages, fixed and immoveable, but on the sliding sand, which will certainly fail you when you will most stand in need of support; I mean, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. If you wish to avoid this impending danger, you must diligently pray for grace, and humble yourselves in the sight of God: You must renounce every delusive scheme of self-righteousness, and must earnestly betake yourself as a poor, lost, miserable sinner unto Jesus Christ. This is the advice given you by the Redeemer: "I counsel thee to buy gold; " tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and

“ and white raiment that thou mayest be
 “ clothed, and that the shame of thy naked-
 “ ness do not appear ; and anoint thy eyes
 “ with eye-salve, that thou mayest see”—
Rev. iii. 18. That is, apply to me for an
 interest in my righteousness, and sanctifying
 grace, that thou mayest be absolved before
 God, and adorned with every virtue which
 can render thee lovely in his sight : Blinded
 as thou art with pride and self-conceit, come,
 and anoint thine eyes with my sovereign eye-
 salve, that thou mayest see ; that is, pray
 earnestly for spiritual illumination ; and dili-
 gently search the scriptures, for by these
 means the eyes of your understanding will be
 enlightened ; you will be brought to entertain
 right sentiments, both of your Saviour and
 yourself ; and then instead of boasting of your
 own works, and relying on your own righ-
 teousness, you will be humbled to the very
 dust, under a sense of your manifold sins, and
 innumerable imperfections, and will learn to
 glory only in the Lord. If you say you have
 no sin, you deceive yourself, and the truth is
 not in you. And if “ all have sinned and
 “ come short of the glory of God,” it is then
 certain that you, as well as others, deserve
 punishment : For, the soul that sinneth, it
 shall

shall die : The wages of sin, (of every sin) is death. " He that offendeth in one point, is " guilty of all.—Curfed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written " in the book of the law to do them"—*Gal.* iii. 10. What think you of these texts?—Are they, or are they not the words of God? Doubtless they are. And if they are, consider seriously what must become of you? You like the Pharisees of old, are blind to your own faults; and puffed up with a vain and impious conceit of your own goodness; you " trust in yourself, (instead of Christ) that " you are righteous, and despise others. Do you not read your own condemnation, in the awful passages before repeated? Have you not sinned, not in one point only, but in thousands, nay, millions of instances? If then the Almighty should enter into judgment with you for what you think the very best action you ever performed, it is certain that in his sight you could not be justified.—Innumerable imperfections cleave to your best performances; your very prayers are attended with many wanderings and distractions; and your repentance needs to be repented of.—Remember this, and tremble at the dreadful delusion you are under, in neglecting your
great

great Redeemer, and building your eternal hopes on a false foundation of a legal righteousness. In a legal sense "there is none righteous, no not one." Fly therefore, to Jesus Christ, who is called in scripture The Lord our Righteousness; and who is both able and willing to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by him. All spiritual blessings are freely offered to you, not in consequence of your works, but thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Hear the apostle's declaration of the matter: Christ is of God, made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption—1 Cor. i. 30. You hence learn, that in Jesus Christ there is wisdom to enlighten your dark understanding; righteousness to justify our guilty persons; sanctification to make you holy; and redemption to make you happy. These are inestimable blessings, and they are freely offered to you, to me, and to the chief of sinners, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Let no flesh glory therefore, in the presence of God: but rather let us, and all men glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Rejoice therefore, in the Lord alway; and again I say, rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto

all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds thro' Christ Jesus—*Phil. iv. 4, 5, 6, 7.*

I have now briefly addressed myself to the ignorant professor of christianity ; to the open and notorious sinner ; and to the proud formalist ; and have endeavoured to point out to each respectively, not only his guilt and danger, but likewise the only sure and certain way in which they may escape the Divine vengeance, and be reconciled to God, by Jesus Christ our Lord, and through faith in his name. May the good Spirit of God open the eyes, and turn the hearts of all such deluded and disobedient professors who now hear me, from the error of their ways, to the wisdom of the just, that they may return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls !

SECTION

SECTION XVI.

*An ADDRESS to the CONVINCED SINNER, the
LUKEWARM PROFESSOR, the UNFAITHFUL
BACKSLIDER, and the REAL CHRISTIAN.*

IN the preceding section, I have given a word of exhortation to the ignorant professor of christianity, to the notorious sinner, and to the proud formalist: I purpose therefore, now, to proceed to address myself to the convinced sinner, the lukewarm professor, the unfaithful backslider, and the real christian.

I. First, let me address myself to the convinced sinner.—You, it seems, have been roused out of your natural state of carnal security; and have been made by the Spirit of God deeply sensible, both of your sinfulness and danger: You are fully convinced of the depravity of your nature, and of your innumerable transgressions against the Divine law.—This conviction begets in you both sorrow and fear: You are sorry that you have so grievously offended God; and fearful on account of the punishment which you deserve for your sins. Happy is it for you that you

are now sensible of your great unworthiness; since this sensibility is calculated to lead you to Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd, and Bishop of souls. Be not afraid of your convictions growing deeper; for, though they may be more painful at present, yet be assured, that they will give you a more quick and lively perception of the infinite value, and glorious excellency of a Redeemer; and lay a most solid foundation for your future peace. A person unconvinced of his sins can have no conception of the inestimable worth of a Saviour, but he who is truly sensible both of his original and actual vileness, esteems him above all things, and is very anxious to obtain an interest in him.—Such is your condition:—God, in his great mercy, has awakened your soul out of the deep sleep of sin, whilst millions around you are still sleeping on, and taking their rest in carnal security, and are on the very brink of eternal misery! Instead therefore, of repining at your spiritual troubles, rather bless God for them; and from a lively conviction of your guilt and danger, cry out with the poor, self-condemned publican; “God be merciful to me a sinner.” Remember, you have the greatest reason to rely upon Jesus Christ, for pardon and salvation. Hear his

his own most gracious invitation: "Come
 "unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy
 "laden, and I will give you rest"—*Matt.* xi.

28. Look therefore unto Jesus Christ with a believing eye, and you will surely find rest unto your soul. Him that cometh unto Christ, he will in no wise cast out. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world—*John* i. 29. Behold him full of grace and truth. See him by faith, set forth as evidently crucified before you, and bearing your sins in his own body on the tree. It is true you cannot believe in Christ, nor do any thing that is good of yourself; but if you earnestly and diligently ask aid of God, he will surely assist you, and help your unbelief. He who has wounded you with a sense of guilt, will certainly, in his own good time, heal your troubled spirit, if you earnestly call upon him, and patiently wait for him in the way of his ordinances; that is, in a due use of the means of grace. This is the way, the only way in which you can find true peace. Beware therefore of that dreadful delusion which too many fall into when under convictions. Satan and his emissaries tempt them to go into carnal company, and to join in vain amusements, and sinful pleasures.——The danger of such

such a conduct is exceeding great. It is resisting the holy Spirit of God, preferring the slavery of satan before the service of your Creator, and tempting your Maker to withdraw his grace from you, and to leave you to perish in your sins. Beware, I say, of this horrible mistake. It is to be feared that it has proved ruinous to thousands; may you be enabled to learn true wisdom from their desperate folly!

You hence learn that it is necessary for you to cherish, instead of stifling your convictions. Take good heed, however, to guard against another device of satan, by which he labors to destroy the souls of those who are deeply convinced of their sins. If he cannot induce them to stifle their convictions, he will then endeavour to drive them to despair.—He will represent their sins as too heinous for God to forgive, or the propitiation of Christ's blood to atone for; or he will suggest, that the day of grace is past, and that it is too late for them to think of obtaining mercy. Such persons are the greatest objects of compassion. Their distress is so exquisite, that it has oft-times occasioned suicide—dreadful consequence indeed! May God, in his infinite mercy, guard you from this desperate action; an action
which

which excludes all possibility of repentance, and consequently of salvation. And indeed, however great, numerous, and aggravated your sins are, yet there is no reason for you to despair. The gospel assures every sinner, who is truly penitent, and comes unto Jesus Christ, of a free and full pardon. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool—*Isa. i. 18*. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin—*John i. 17*. Can any words be more comfortable? Can any assurance be more reviving? Impossible. Jesus Christ has fully atoned for all the sins of penitent believers. Lift up thy head then, O thou poor afflicted sinner! Though thy sins have been many and great, yet remember, that the mercy of God, and the merits of Christ, are far greater. Jesus Christ is a great and merciful High-Priest, whose pity inclines him to save sinners, and whose power enables him fully to do so. The vilest of sinners have been pardoned by him; and remember, to your comfort, that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Look therefore unto Christ, first *for*, and then with a believing eye; go on steadily in the path of duty, and be assured that your all-gracious

gracious and merciful God, will, in his own due time, speak peace unto your soul, support you under all temptations, and bring you at last to his heavenly kingdom.

II. I proceed secondly, to address myself to the lukewarm professor of christianity.—You, it seems, have some little regard for your spiritual concerns, yet you do not attend to them with that earnestness, zeal, and diligence, which the infinite importance of them so justly demands. To you belongs the character of the Laodiceans, mentioned in *Revelations* iii. to you likewise, appertain their guilt and condemnation. Hear, and duly consider the awful denunciation which is there recorded: These things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, (that is, Jesus Christ) the Beginning (or the Beginner) of the creation of God: I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth—*verses* 14, 15, 16. This is a very awful passage, and loudly declares how hateful and offensive a lukewarm professor is to Jesus Christ. Such he here disowns; and not only disowns, but disdains, and even loaths, and detests. Con- sider

sider therefore, seriously, both your guilt and danger.—There is no neutrality allowable in religion; and indifference, in this respect, is equally inexcusable. No man can serve two masters; we must either be the servants of Christ, or the slaves of satan. If then Christ be God, follow him; if Baal, follow him.—Choose you this day whom you will serve.—You cannot serve God and Mammon.—God will not accept of a divided heart; on the contrary, he requires, and may most justly demand the whole of it. These are his words: My son, give me thine heart. And has he not the best, the justest, nay, the only legal claim to it? He at first created us out of nothing; has ever since preserved and provided for us, and has likewise made a most gracious and ample provision both for our present comfort, and eternal felicity thro' Jesus Christ. These are invaluable blessings, and such privileges as are truly inestimable, particularly the redemption of the world, by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ. Say then, O thou lukewarm professor of christianity, tell me I say, whether this all-gracious and glorious God and Saviour has not a just right to demand and require you to present yourself, your soul, and body to be a reason-

E e

able

able, holy, and lively sacrifice unto him?—Are you not bound by every tye, both of duty and gratitude, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your strength? Nay, ought you not to worship him, to give him thanks, to put your whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honor his holy name, and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of your life? Unless your conscience is grown callous, it will certainly answer these questions in the affirmative: It will be needless to multiply arguments in so plain a case; I shall therefore only remind you of the necessity of earnestly seeking in faith for a larger share of the sacred influences of the holy Spirit; and when this is received, you will, instead of continuing lukewarm, become truly zealous, and heartily repent of your former indifferency.

I proceed, thirdly, to address myself to the unfaithful backslider.—You have formerly known the way of righteousness; you have been convinced of the truth and importance of religion, and have, in some degree, experienced its comfort and happiness, how dreadful, therefore, is your ingratitude, how excusable is your folly? Is it not ungrateful

to

the last degree, to sin against the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort?—And does it not argue the most inexcusable madness and folly, thus to forsake the Fountain of living water, and to hew to yourself cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water? The unspeakable love of God, so clearly displayed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, lays you under an indispensable obligation, truly to love, and faithfully to serve your great Creator: How can you then, how dare you to continue in sin, and trample upon the riches of the Divine goodness? I pray God you may be truly sensible of your guilt and folly, and with a penitent heart bewail your transgressions; then may you justly hope for a return of the Divine favor, in Jesus Christ; attentively consider the causes of your backsliding; frequently review them by way of caution, and in particular, watch and pray against your darling sin, the sin that does so easily beset you—*Heb. xii. 1.* Make no long tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put it not off from day to day. You, alas! have left your first Love; you have most shamefully wandered from the sheep-fold of Christ, and have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme: Remember, therefore,

from whence thou art fallen, walk humbly with thy God, repent, and do thy first works: Return unto God thro' Christ, and this good Shepherd and Bishop of your soul will heal all your backslidings, and will love you freely.

IV. I proceed, fourthly, to address myself to the real christian.—But first, it may be necessary to observe, that there are various classes in the school of Christ. Our Lord points out the various degrees of their progress, under the similitude of the growth of grain: First, the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear—*Mark* iv. 28. And St. John confirms us in the same truth, by distinguishing between children, young men, and fathers in Christ—1 *John* ii. 12, 13. By children, we may understand weak believers, or, doubting christians. Such ought earnestly and constantly to look to Christ for assistance, and he will help their unbelief, dispel their doubts, and fill them with all joy and peace in believing. By young men in Christ, we may understand all those who are brought to rest in Jesus Christ, by a spiritual apprehension of his complete suitableness and sufficiency, as the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of all who trust in him; and are enabled to say, by a strong act of appropriating

priating faith, "Christ is ours, and we are his." By fathers in Christ we are to understand, the most confirmed and established christians; such as are strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, triumphing against the world, the flesh, and the devil, thro' the victorious grace of Him, who loved them, and gave himself for them. It appears then, by these observations, that all are to be esteemed real christians, who, being deeply convinced of their original and actual transgressions, have fled to the cross of Christ for refuge, and have put on Christ, by the exercise of a true and living faith. Such are born again, not of water only, but of the Spirit too. They have experienced the inward and spiritual grace in baptism; that is, a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, and therefore they are to be esteemed, not as almost, but as altogether christians.

To the true believer, or real christian, I now proceed, lastly, to address myself.—
You, my christian friend, and brother, are in a most happy, and safe condition. You are reconciled unto God, thro' Christ; you are washed from all your sins in the blood of Christ; you are justified by faith in his name; you are sanctified by his Spirit; and, by stedfast

fast looking unto Christ, who is both able and willing to support you, you will certainly be saved from wrath thro' him, and be made partaker of his heavenly kingdom. Such then is the hope of your calling; and is it not a most blessed and glorious hope? Certainly it is. Be persuaded, therefore, daily and hourly to look to Christ, that you may receive grace for grace out of his fulness, and in consequence hereof, have a full reward.—Remember, that you live in the midst of a world which lieth in wickedness, and are surrounded by many and powerful enemies.—These considerations should engage you to walk circumspectly and warily in these perilous times, and to continue instant in prayer, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for a plentiful supply of his holy Spirit; Under the influences of this divine Agent, you will be enabled to defeat the malice of your ghostly enemies, and to triumph against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Greater, infinitely greater is He that is for you, than all that are against you. Fear not therefore, your Redeemer is strong; he is mighty to save. Actuated by a sincere love to him, and confiding in his gracious promises, be strong, and of a good courage; be not ashamed of the cross of Christ;

Christ; endure with a noble firmness all the oppositions, and all the trials which you are sure to meet with from unreasonable and wicked men; you must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. Who then, or what are you, that you should expect an exemption from it? If therefore you will act like a true christian, you must take up your cross daily, and follow him. Remember, that Christ himself went not up to joy before he suffered pain. It is enough for his disciple to be as his master. Reflect frequently on the ignominious treatment that Christ met with, and the dreadful sufferings which he endured on your account: This consideration will, by grace tend greatly to reconcile you to every hardship you may meet with in the path of duty. This life is only a state of probation; it is the seed-time of eternity; it cannot last long; and the light afflictions which you meet with in the cause of Christ, will work out for you hereafter, a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory. The hope of your calling is truly glorious, pray earnestly, therefore, for grace, that you may be cleansed from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit;

pray

pray too, that as you grow in years, you
 may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of
 our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—The
 more you know of him, the more you must
 and will love him.—He is fairer than the
 children of men.—He is the Chief among ten
 thousand, and altogether lovely.—He is the
 mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince
 of Peace—*Isa. ix. 6.* Confiding in the faith-
 fulness, power, love, and goodness of this
 Almighty Saviour, you have no reason to be
 afraid, but every reason to be encouraged, and
 even to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full
 of glory.—Be sober however, be vigilant :
 Pray that you may become more and more
 humble ; more and more sensible of your own
 vileness, and unworthiness in the sight of
 God.—Before honor is humility.—God looks
 with pleasure on him who is of an humble
 and contrite spirit ; but he abhorreth the
 proud, and beholdeth them afar off.—No
 man is of any estimation in God's account,
 till, thro' grace, he is nothing in his own.—
 You cannot possibly be too humble : A fre-
 quent review of your great unworthiness, both
 original and actual, will tend to mortify that
 wretched remainder of pride, which still
 cleaves to you. When you perceive any proud
 thought

thought rising in your breast, respecting your spiritual attainments, ask yourself the following questions: Who maketh me to differ from another?—What have I that I have not received? Remember, that without Christ you can do nothing; and that in the midst of your highest attainments, in many things you offend; walk humbly therefore, with thy God.—Follow the Apostle's advice and example—Forgetting those things which are behind, reach forward unto those things which are before, and press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus—*Phil.* iii. 13, 14. Count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord; and pray earnestly that you may be more and more found in him; not having, that is not trusting in your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is thro' the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith—*Phil.* iii. 8, 9. Jesus Christ is the only sure foundation whereon we may safely build our hope of salvation: Other foundation can no man lay—Take heed however, that your faith in the Redeemer worketh more and more by love. Remember, that as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is

dead also—*Jam. ii. 26.* Guard against a legal spirit : Place no dependence in point of justification, on any, or even all your duties.—After you have done all, (if this were possible) still you are an unprofitable servant : By grace you are saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God.—Let it be your care, that all who behold your good conversation in Christ, may plainly see that you have not received the grace of God in vain—Beware of sinking into an indolent and backsliding state—You are the salt of the earth ; let your conversation be at all times, as becometh the gospel.—You are the light of the world ; let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.—In all your thoughts, words, and actions, strive to promote the Divine glory, and the good of souls.—Then will your path be like the path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.—Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these

these things; think on them, so as to observe and do them with a single eye to God's glory; and be assured, that the God of Peace shall be with you, to support you in all dangers, and carry you through all temptations; and when time has finished its course, and your earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, you shall have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens—
2 Cor. v. 1.

these things; think on them, to as to shew
and do them with a singleness to God's glory;
and be assured, that the God of Israel shall be
with you to support you in all dangers; and
carry you through all tribulations; and when
time has finished its course, and your earthly
state of this tabernacle is dissolved, you
shall have a dwelling in God, in which you
shall have hands, eternal in the heavens—

L
o
T
sh
er
w
an
an
T
in
W
pe
go
th
fe

FORMS of DEVOTION,

For the Use of Families, and for private
Persons, in various frames of mind,
or circumstances of life.

PRAYERS for FAMILIES.

MORNING.

BLESSED Lord God, who hast formed
us for thyself, and to whom we owe
our being, and all that we are and have:
Thou hast not only made us capable of wor-
shipping thee, but hast every way obliged and
encouraged us to it. Prepare our hearts, that
we may worship thee in spirit and in truth;
and mercifully forgive all our past neglect,
and the sin which cleaves to all our services.
Thy mercies are renewed to us every morn-
ing, and great is thy faithfulness and love.
We desire to adore and praise thee for all the
perfections of thy nature, and for all thy
goodness extended unto us. We would give
thee unfeigned thanks for thy merciful pre-
servation of us through the dangers and dark-
ness

ness of the past night; for the refreshing rest which thou hast given us; for our present health and safety; for the light of the returning day; for our food and raiment; and for all the many comforts of this life which thou bestowest upon us; confessing ourselves less than the least of all thy mercies: More especially we desire to praise thee with our whole hearts for that greatest of all thy blessings, the redemption of our lost and ruined souls, by the precious blood of JESUS CHRIST, and for thy word and gospel, which brings tidings of it to our ears. O affect all our hearts with a deep sense of the value of this mercy, and of our own great need of it. By the teaching of thy word and spirit, shew us our Sins of nature and practice; and incline us to fly for refuge to CHRIST, without delay: And let none of us remain satisfied under the guilt and power of sin. Help us this morning to apply to the blood of atonement for pardon, and for a sense of thy favour; and let thy love constrain us to live no more to ourselves, but to him that died for us and rose again. Give us that faith and love in our hearts whereby we may hate and depart from all iniquity, and let the grace of thy Spirit be ever with us to enable us to stand against and overcome every temptation to evil, whether from the world, or Satan, or our own corrupt hearts. Keep us through-

throughout the day in prayer and watchfulness; and be thou nigh to deliver us in every time of danger. May we spend this day as if it was our last; and may it be the daily concern of our lives, to be ready for death and judgment, whenever thou shalt call upon us. Incline us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and in this way to trust thee for all needful supplies for the body. Assist and prosper us in the work of our hands, and in all our necessary temporal affairs, that we may provide things honest in the sight of all men. May we be, not slothful in business, and yet fervent in spirit serving the Lord. In our particular stations of life, may we be enabled to act according to thy word; and so to demean ourselves towards one another, and towards all, that in this, as well as in other respects, we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and shew that we have not received the grace of God in vain.—Bless each of us, both in our bodies and in our souls, as is most suitable to our several states and circumstances; and enable us to trust thee for all that we stand in need of, and to thank thee with unfeigned hearts for all that we receive. Make us ready for all that thou art purposing to do with us; that we may rejoice in thee, and be thankful, and resign ourselves to thy will, whether in sickness or health, prosperity or adversity.

adversity. Make us followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises; that when this short life is ended, we may take up our everlasting abode, not in the regions of darkness and woe, but in those mansions of bliss and glory which thou hast provided for those that follow CHRIST in the regeneration. All these blessings, with whatsoever is necessary for us and for all mankind, we ask in the name and for the sake of JESUS CHRIST our prevailing Mediator. And in his words, we would further cry unto thee:

Our Father which art in Heaven! hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven: give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Another MORNING PRAYER.

O LORD our God, we desire, with all humility and reverence, to adore thee, as a being who art infinite in all perfections and excellencies, and as the author and giver of all good to us thy unworthy creatures. We would reckon it our great privilege, as well as our duty, to draw nigh to the throne of
of

of thy grace by JESUS CHRIST. Grant that we may always account the worship of thee in our family, the most needful part of our daily business, and our most pleasant employ. Be thou the God of our family; and whatever others do, may we of this house always serve the Lord.—We thank thee for all the mercies of the night, and for the health and safety, and comforts more than we can express, which are continued to us until this hour. Suffer not thy benefits to slip out of our minds. Give us grateful hearts; and dispose us by thy grace to use all our temporal blessings according to thy will, and to thy glory.

We confess, O Lord, that we have sinned and come short of the glory of God : we have corrupt and sinful natures : our inward parts are very wickedness : we are prone to depart and backslide from thee. And our actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed, are more in number than the hairs upon our heads ; and upon a view of our exceeding sinfulness and guilt, our hearts may justly fail us. We can have no hope from ourselves, or from any thing we have done. We have no righteousness of our own to trust in, or to plead before thee. But we desire to bless thee for ever, that thou hast opened a door of hope for us in Jesus Christ : that he hath suffered once for sin, the Just for the unjust, to bring

G g

guilty

guilty rebels back to God, and that He is become the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth : we bless thee, that on this account, thou canst pardon our sins, to the glory of thy justice, truth and holiness, as well as of thy grace and mercy. Lord, grant that we may be found in Christ, not having our own righteousness ! Let it be the chief concern and care of each of us, that we may have redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of thy grace. Be merciful to our unrighteousnesses, and our sins and iniquities do thou remember no more. May we come to Christ, laboring and heavy-laden, to find rest for our souls ; and do thou dispose us to take his yoke upon us, and to learn of him : renew us after his image, and enable us to walk after his example. May we be dead, and risen with Christ, thro' faith of thy Spirit's operation, and seek those things that are above, setting our affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. Mortify all sin in us ; and suffer us not to be tempted above that we are able to bear. Make us strong in the grace of Jesus, that we may fight the good fight of faith, against every spiritual enemy, and be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; and do thou put thy fear in our hearts, that we may not depart from thee.—Help us to live this day,
with

with eternity in view, and to set thee always before us. Prosper us in all our lawful undertakings. Prepare us for every trial, and make it profitable to our souls. Watch over us for good, in our going out, and in our coming in. Give us the joy of thy salvation, and the comforts of thy Spirit. Help us to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks; and whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, to do it to thy glory. Give us grace to keep always a conscience void of offence towards God and all men; and produce and increase that faith in us, which works by love to God and to all mankind, both friends and enemies—Bless and preserve thy universal church, and let there be added to it daily such as shall be saved. Let the kingdom of thy grace, and the saving knowledge of Christ, be extended throughout the world; and let it greatly increase in our place and nation. Awaken and convert careless and impenitent sinners: strengthen and encourage all such as seek thy face, that they may never turn back: And let all thy children be taught of thee, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, till they come to be with Him where he is: and in this number may we all be found, for thy mercies sake, thro' the same all-sufficient and only Redeemer. *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

A Third MORNING PRAYER.

MOST holy Lord God ! We do not presume to present ourselves before thee, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. Thy nature and property is always to have mercy and to forgive ! Therefore receive our humble petitions, and enable us to ask faithfully, that we may obtain effectually. We confess that we are guilty and miserable offenders. We were by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath ; and are so tied and bound with the chain of our sins, that we can in no wise deliver ourselves : We have gone astray from thy ways like lost sheep ; having left undone the things that we ought to have done, and done the things that we ought not to have done ; and there is no health in us. We confess that we have most grievously sinned by thought, word and deed, against thy divine Majesty, and have provoked most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. O grant us thy grace, that we may earnestly repent, and be heartily sorry for all our misdoings : let the remembrance of them be grievous unto us, and the burden of them found to be intolerable : have mercy upon us, most merciful Father ; and for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past. Receive and comfort us, when grieved and wearied with
the

the burden of our iniquities; and make us to know and feel that there is none other name under heaven given among men, in and thro' whom we may obtain health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thro' faith of thy Spirit's operation, may we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, and be one with Christ and Christ with us. O may we be regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, and daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit. Give us grace that we may cast away all the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light. Graft in our hearts the love of thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same. By thy Holy Spirit give us to have a right judgment in all things, and ever to rejoice in his holy comfort; and forasmuch as through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments, we may please thee both in will and deed. Enable us to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and because thro' our sins and wickedness we are fore lett and hindered in running the race set before us, let thy bountiful mercy speedily help and deliver us, that with pure hearts and minds we may follow thee the only God; and that, thou being our leader
and

and guide, we may so pass thro' things temporal, that we finally lose not the things which are eternal.—And while we ask these blessings from thee, we would render unto thee the tribute of our most grateful praise. It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, the Father of mercies.—Day by day we would magnify thee. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, and particularly that thou hast brought us in safety to the beginning of this day: But above all, we bless thee for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Give us, we pray thee, such a sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days: So that whenever we shall depart this life, we may sleep in Jesus, and at the general resurrection in the last day be found acceptable in thy sight.—We pray thee, O Lord, to bless and keep all thy people. Lead all who profess and call themselves Christians into the way of truth. Have mercy on all Jews, Turks, Infidels and Hereticks, and
bring

bring them to thy own fold. Make thy ways known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations. Forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn their hearts. Give to all that are afflicted patience under their sufferings, and an happy issue out of all their afflictions.—Keep us this day, we beseech thee, both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls: Suffer us not to fall into sin, nor to run into any kind of danger; but let all our doings be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord: In whose words we would further pray, *Our Father, &c.*

EVENING.

O LORD and heavenly Father, we thy unworthy servants desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the mercies of the day past; as well as for all other thy unnumbered and unceasing benefits bestowed upon us, ever since we were born. Thou art good, and doest good. The fruits of thy love and bounty, we have daily and hourly received. We are indebted to thee for our life, and for the preservation of it; for our health and peace, our friends, our food and raiment, and for present comforts more than
we

we can express. O do thou give us such a sense of thy goodness upon our minds, that we may acknowledge it, not only with our lips and upon our knees, but with real gratitude and love to thee in our hearts. And especially, we beseech thee so deeply to affect our minds with the consideration and remembrance of thy redeeming love, and that rich provision which thou hast made in Jesus Christ for our sinful and guilty souls, and the door of mercy and acceptance which thou hast open'd for such sinners as we are, thro' his obedience unto death ; that we may praise thee as thy children in this world, and hereafter unite in praising thee for ever, with the whole multitude of thy saints in glory. Let the thought of all thy goodness and long-suffering lead us to repentance ; and let a view of the suffering love of Jesus break our hearts because of our sins which pierced and nailed him to the cross.—We would confess with shame and self-abasement, that by the depravity of our nature, and by the daily and hourly rebellion of our lives, we have transgressed thy law, offended thy justice, abused thy patience and mercy, and crucified the Lord of glory. Teach us to know our transgressions and our sins through the conviction of thy good Spirit, and to apply by a lively faith to the blood of sprinkling for the pardon of them ; and let the happy enjoyment of thy

thy forgiving mercy in Christ be brought in-
to our souls, that we may rejoice in thee as
our reconciled God, and be prepared to serve
thee in love as thy children, and walk before
thee in newness of life, to thy honor and
glory. Let all our trust and confidence be in
the atonement and righteousness of Christ
for acceptance and favor with thee, living
and dying; and thus may we find that relief
and peace for our minds, and that strength
of salvation and comfort, which neither un-
belief nor Satan can deprive us of. Lead us
in the paths of universal godliness and righte-
ousness. Let us be not of the world, as Christ
was not of it, nor conformed to it in any of
its evil ways, pleasures or vanities. Save us
from the corruptions and deceitfulness of our
own evil hearts; and from all the devices of
the devil, who goeth always about seeking
whom he may devour. Direct us in all thy
ways by thy word and Spirit, and suffer us
not to decline from thy paths. Engraft thy
love in our hearts, that we may hate the thing
which is evil, and always be ready to choose
any suffering rather than sin: And from an
affecting view of the treachery and depravity
of our hearts and of the many dangers we are
exposed to, may we rely only upon the grace
of Christ which is sufficient to keep us from
falling. Thro' this grace may we go on from
strength to strength, and daily proceed in all

H h

virtue

virtue and godliness of living ; that whenever death shall overtake us, we may be found ripe for heaven, and obtain an abundant entrance thereinto.—Forgive all that thy pure eye hath seen evil in us this day : be not extreme to mark our transgressions : but grant us to lie down this night in peace with thee, and with an interest in the salvation and hope of the gospel ; that if death should arrest us before the morning light, we may not lift up our eyes in torments, but find ourselves in thy embraces, as the monuments of thy rich grace and mercy in Christ for ever.—O Lord, in mercy hear these our requests : and likewise extend thy love to our fellow-mortals in general. Have mercy upon all men. Turn the unconverted from the error of their ways. Bless and defend all thy people, and rule and govern thy holy church universal in the right way. Comfort the afflicted with spiritual consolations. Forgive our enemies, and incline us to love and forgive them. Bless all our friends, relations, acquaintance and neighbors : protect them and us from all the perils and dangers of this night. Unite us together, in the enjoyment of all spiritual blessings, and bestow on us whatever is needful for the body. All this we ask in the name, and for the sake of Jesus Christ. *Our Father, &c.*

Another

Another. EVENING PRAYER.

O LORD GOD Almighty ! who dwellest in the heavens, and yet beholdest all the inhabitants of the earth ; in whom we live and move and have our being, and by whom we have been upholden ever since we were born : We would lift up our souls unto thee, and present unto thee our evening sacrifice of prayer and praise. How great and marvellous is thy condescension and goodness, in that thou wilt look upon such sinners as we are. We confess that we are transgressors from the womb ; yea, we were by nature born in sin and the children of wrath. As the posterity of fallen Adam, we are altogether corrupt and polluted in all the parts and faculties of our souls, and inclinable only to evil continually : And from the fountain of iniquity in our hearts, have daily proceeded innumerable streams of actual rebellion against thy divine Majesty. Our sins of omission and commission have been more than the sands on the sea shore ; and every one of them is deserving of thy wrath to the uttermost, even of that eternal death which thou hast declared to be the wages of sin. What great reason have we then to acknowledge, that it is of thy mercies that we are not consumed ! How great is thy mercy toward us, in not having consigned us before now to the lowest

H h 2

hell !

hell ! How wonderful is thy forbearance,
 in waiting till now to be gracious to us ; and
 in still permitting and inviting us to come
 unto thee by Jesus Christ. How unspeakable
 is thy love, in having given thy dear Son out
 of thy bosom, to be made in our nature, to
 fulfil all righteousness for guilty men, and to
 become an atoning sacrifice for sins ! Help
 us, O Lord, to draw nigh unto thee by that
 new and living way which he hath opened for
 sinners thro' the vail of his suffering flesh :
 Make all our sins hateful and burdensome to
 us ; and grant us by faith in the blood of
 Jesus, to obtain reconciliation with thee, and
 thy peace in our consciences. Hide thy face
 from our sins, and blot out all our iniquities.
 Lead us continually to the fountain opened
 in the blood of our Saviour for sin and un-
 cleanness, that our guilty and polluted souls
 may be made whiter than snow. Mercifully
 forgive our sins of this day. We confess that
 instead of having loved and served thee as we
 ought to have done, throughout the day, we
 have been adding to the multitude of our for-
 mer rebellions. O give us daily repentance,
 and pardon for our daily sins ; and help us
 daily to fly for refuge to Christ, and to find
 him precious and desirable above all things,
 to our souls. By faith in him, may we not
 only obtain acceptance with thee, but like-
 wise the powerful influences and constant sup-
 plies

plies of that Spirit, which he received without measure, to sanctify and renew our souls after thy image and likeness. Thro' the cross of Christ may we be crucified to the world, and the world to us. Through the Spirit may we be enabled to mortify the deeds of the body, that we may live. Thro' the victory of our Savior, may we get the victory over all the assaults and temptations of the devil. May we shew that we are in Christ, and delivered from condemnation, by being new creatures, and by walking no longer after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Convert us in our hearts from every idol, and from the love of every sin; and strengthen us by thy grace, that the whole tenor of our lives and conversations may be as becomes the gospel; that we may always exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and all men.—Give the same blessings to all our friends and relations, that they also may be subjects together with us of thy kingdom of grace, and heirs of thy kingdom of glory.—Feed and govern thy whole church; and let all that love thee, of every denomination, be kept from the evil which is in the world, from the evil of their own hearts, and all the devices of the devil; keep them humble, believing, and holy, and faithful unto death. Increase and multiply the number of those that are such: Let thy gospel kingdom be enlarged,

enlarged, and flourish, and overspread the whole earth. Especially do thou cause it to prevail more and more in these kingdoms. Make the light of gospel-truth every where to shine forth, and make manifest the favor of the knowledge of Christ in every place, that this may indeed be a righteous nation, and a Christian land.—Bless our rulers and governors; rule their hearts in thy faith and fear, and enable them to act uprightly in their high stations, and to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well.—Accept our praises and thanksgivings for all the mercies of this day; and give us grace to use and improve all thy temporal benefits, according to thy will, and to thy glory.—Preserve us, and all belonging to us, during the dangers and darkness of the night: give us quiet and refreshing rest, and let no plague come nigh our dwelling. Fit us for the sleep of death, whenever it shall come upon us; and enable us to be daily waiting for, and expecting it, in the faith of Jesus as the conqueror of death, and in continual watching and prayer.—Grant that we may all belong to thy family and household. Be nigh to us, and give thine angels charge over us to keep us; and whether we wake or sleep, may we still be with thee; and living and dying and for ever, may we be thine, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ. *Our Father, &c.*

A Third

A Third EVENING PRAYER.

O LORD God of Hosts; the Almighty Creator of all things, and most gracious Benefactor to the human race: Make us sensible how much it is our privilege, as well as duty, to worship thee. Convince us of thy greatness and goodness, and of our own vileness and unworthiness; and enable us to come into thy presence with reverence and godly fear, with deep humiliation and self-abasement, and yet with confidence in thy promises which thou hast made and established in Christ. Teach us to ask such blessings as are according to thy will; and give us fervent desires after those things which we ask with our lips; that our prayers may not be in mere formality and carelessness, but that we may worship thee in spirit and in truth, and receive a gracious answer to our requests, in the name of Jesus Christ thy dearly beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased. We are in ourselves wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. We are sinners against heaven, and in thy sight, both by nature and practice. We are altogether lost and undone; and can bring no relief to ourselves: We need to ask and receive every thing from thee, the fountain of all grace and mercy: And we bless thy name, that thou art good, and ready to forgive; and that

that thou givest liberally to all that ask of thee, and upbraidest not. O grant us, we pray thee, the free and full pardon of all our sins thro' the precious blood of Christ, and cover all our deformity with the spotless robe of his righteousness, that we may be blameless and acceptable in thy sight: And give us an humble and lively faith in him, as our Saviour and our Lord. Grant us the plentiful influences of thy Holy Spirit out of the fulness of Christ, to turn us unto thee, to enlighten our dark minds, to renew our depraved hearts, and to help us in every time of need, that we may fight the good fight of faith, and walk before thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life, renouncing the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. Let us not rest in the dead form of godliness; but give us the lively power of it in our souls: And let it be our happy privilege to live a life of prayer and communion with the Father and the Son thro' the Spirit, as the beginning and foretaste of heaven.—We thank thee, O Lord, for preserving us this day, and bringing us in safety to the conclusion of it, and for all the comforts of this life; confessing ourselves unworthy of the least of them.—We desire to take shame to ourselves for the sins of this day, and beseech thee not to enter in-

to judgment with us for them, but to blot them out of the book of thy remembrance, and to accept us in thy dear Son, to whose cross we would fly for refuge.—Take us, and all belonging to us, under thy powerful protection this night: Let thy providential care be over us, to preserve us in our unguarded hours. Keep us from all inward and outward evil. Save us from vain and sinful imaginations, and enable us to meditate on thy word both by day and by night. Give us such rest as may fit us for the duties of the following day, if thou shalt be pleased to add another day to our lives; and teach us to act in our several stations according to thy will, and as becomes Christians. These blessings, with all that is needful for us, for thy whole church, and for all mankind, we humbly beg of thee in the name and for the sake of our only Mediator, Saviour, and Hope, the Lord Jesus Christ. And in his perfect form of prayer, we would further call upon thee.—*Our Father, &c.*

LORD'S DAY MORNING.

MOST great, glorious, and eternal Lord God! We would adore thee with all the powers and affections of our souls, as the Almighty Creator of the world, and as the merciful Saviour of sinful and miserable
I i men;

men; who didst rest the seventh day from the works which thou didst make, and didst also sanctify the Christian Sabbath by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We thank thee, O Lord, for thy preservation of us thro' the past night, and for the return of thy own day: And we would esteem it our privilege and happiness to be employed in thy more immediate service. We acknowledge that we have not improved thy sabbaths and ordinances as we ought to have done: And we desire to humble ourselves before thee for having trifled with them in time past, and abused them; and for all other our manifold provocations. Lord, lay not any of our iniquities to our charge; but cleanse our souls from the guilt and pollution of them all, in the blood of the Lamb, and make them to be as tho' they had never been: And let the remembrance of our past neglect and ingratitude, make us now the more in earnest to use every means of grace for the profit of our souls, and for thy glory. Prepare us this day to worship thee in spirit and truth, both in public and private. Let the desire of our souls be to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. Pour thy good Spirit upon us, that in the use of thy blessed ordinances we may obtain and grow in the faith and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the power of godliness. Deliver us from
the

the coldness of our affections, and from the wanderings and distractions of our thoughts; Let our hearts be fixed, and our desires fervent; that we may join in the assemblies of thy people, with true devotion, in offering up our united prayers and praises; and may be able to say from happy experience, that it is good for us to draw near to thee; and that a day in thy courts is better than a thousand others. May we love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. Let thy Sabbath be our delight; holy and honourable in our esteem. Suffer us not to be forgetful hearers, but receivers and doers of thy word. May we treasure it up in an honest and good heart: Let not the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, or the lusts of other things, choak the good seed, and render it unfruitful. O let us not perish for ever, with the sound of Salvation in our ears: But let thy Spirit open our hearts, and testify of Christ, and reveal him in us as the hope of glory, that we may truly receive him and walk in him, and be saved by him, in time, and thro' all eternity: And thus, let us have cause to bless and adore thee for ever for thine ordinances, and that ever we heard the gospel's joyful sound, — Thanks be to thy name for that grace, mercy, and peace, which is set before us in a dying Jesus; for the word of reconciliation

that we are permitted to hear; and for thy peculiar kindness in visiting our nation with the light of thy saving truth. O impress our hearts more deeply with a sense of the worth of it, and of thy distinguished goodness to our land: And let thy gospel come to us, and to others all around us, and to our perishing fellow-mortals every where, not in word only, but in power and in the Holy-ghost: And grant thy presence with all worshipping assemblies this day, and especially with our's. Bless all thy ministers, every where, that teach and preach Jesus Christ, and especially him who is over us in the Lord: Make them diligent, and faithful, and holy, and exemplary: Teach them by thy Spirit, that they may teach others aright: Enable them rightly to divide the word of truth, and to declare the whole counsel of God: And accompany thy word in their mouths with the power of thy grace, that it may be attended with abundant success in the conversion of sinners, the comfort and encouragement of those that seek thy face, and the edification of thy faithful people.— Make this, we beseech thee, a blessed and glorious day, and a day much to be remembered, by the destruction of the kingdom of sin and darkness, and by the increase and enlargement of thy own kingdom in the world.

world. Wherever Christ is preached, let not thy word return unto thee void; but accomplish what thou pleatest, and prosper in the thing for which thou dost send it. Let many be born again this day by means of it; and all thy children fed thereby, that they may grow up into Christ in faith and holiness, till they arrive in that world of bliss and glory, where ordinances will be no longer needful.—Help us, gracious Lord, to go to thy house trusting in the multitude of thy mercies, and, with serious preparation of heart, to wait upon and seek thee. Pour thy Spirit upon minister and people; and give a blessing to us and to all that shall meet with us, suited to the case of each person. And grant that we may all so worship thee, and receive thy message, and so spend this and every sabbath, that we may have an earnest and foretaste of that everlasting rest which remaineth for all thy people. Hear us, O Lord, and do for us, and for thy whole church, greater and better things than we are able to ask or think, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Saviour: Who hath taught us to pray, saying, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

LORD'S DAY EVENING.

O Lord, the holy God, who art most blessed for evermore, and high above all heavens; we thy unworthy and sinful creatures again present ourselves before the throne of thy Majesty. Assist and teach us by thy Spirit, that we may call upon thee in an acceptable manner, in the prevailing name of Jesus Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession. We must at all times address ourselves unto thee as guilty and miserable sinners, and with the publican's cry in our lips, God be merciful unto us sinners. We have always been rebellious against thee: Our hearts are foolish and depraved; and all our ways have been perverse before thee. Even our best actions and religious services have been exceedingly defiled with sin, and can by no means bear the severity of thy judgment. So far are we from having any merit of our own, that the sinful defilement of our best righteousness, is sufficient to condemn us. Lord help us to loath ourselves in our own sight for all our abominations, and to take refuge in thy mercy. For the sake of that dear Redeemer, who suffered once for sin, pass by all our transgressions, and lay them not to our charge.— Pardon the iniquity of our holy things, and whatever in us has been displeasing to thee
this

this day : Impute not to us the vanity and distractions of our minds, our want of fervency and zeal in thy worship, or any of our omissions or neglect : But accept us in Jesus Christ the blessed Surety of sinners, and embrace us with the arms of thy mercy.—

We thank thee that there is forgiveness with thee, and for the invitations and encouragement thou dost give us to return unto thee, and to hope in thee. For ever blessed be thy name for the grace and merit of Jesus Christ, and for the glad tidings of salvation thro' him, who is both able and willing to save to the uttermost, and whose errand into the world was to save sinners, even the chief. Thanks be unto thee that we are allowed to hear of these things ; that we have thy word daily in our hands, and sounding in our ears from sabbath to sabbath, We bless thee particularly for the opportunities we have had this day, of assembling together to join in thy worship and to hear thy gospel message. Forbid it, O Lord, that these mercies should turn to our greater condemnation, by our abuse and careless disregard of them. O that all our waiting upon thee in thine house, may not be in vain ! Engraft thy word inwardly in our hearts, and help us to mix faith with it, and to yield obedience to it, that it may profit us. Fix it in our memories, and write it in our minds, that we may bring forth the fruits of it in our
lives.

lives. May we receive with meekness every part of thy word : May we take warning by thy threatnings, believe thy doctrines, embrace thy promises, accept thine offered salvation, and willingly obey thy commands.—Grant that by the employments of this sabbath, we may be fitted to walk with thee in faith and holiness, throughout the week ! and learn, while we are engaged in the business of our callings, to look, not at the things which are seen and are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, and are eternal.—Wherever the good seed of thy word has been sown, water it with the dew of thy grace from above, that it may bring forth a plenteous increase. Lord, grant that good and lasting impressions may have been made upon the hearts of multitudes. Let thy gospel be the favour of life unto life, and not of death unto death. Let all who are favored with the light of it, know in this their day, the things that belong to their peace, and the time of their visitation : And in thy mercy cause this saving light to shine among such as remain in darkness, and the shadow of death, that their feet may be guided into the way of peace. Make thy ways known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations. Shew pity to those that are perishing for lack of knowledge. The harvest is great, and the labourers are few : O send forth more faithful labourers

boursers into thine harvest.—May all the bishops and ministers of thy word, be taught of thee, and be zealous and diligent to promote thy glory and the salvation of souls :—May they preach not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord ; and be ensamples to thy flock, in faith and in all godliness. Have mercy upon this sinful land ; and let not iniquity be our ruin. Restrain the aboundings of wickedness in rich and poor : Give repentance to those of every rank ! and by the influences of thy gospel turn us, as a people to thyself ; and make us sensible of the distinguished privileges which we enjoy, both civil and religious ; that we may lament our abuse of them, and improve them henceforth to thy glory.—Order and over-rule all our public affairs to thy glory and the good of thy church. Bless the king and all the royal family, and grant that they may all belong to the household of God ; and do thou rule their hearts in thy faith, fear and love—Guide and govern all our magistrates, judges, senators, and nobles, that they may act uprightly in their high stations ; so that judgment may run down as water, and righteousness as a mighty stream ! and that under the protection of civil authority, we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.—Father of mercies, supply the wants of those that are in necessity ; support and comfort all

that are sick and afflicted, or under any calamity: Sanctify their distresses for the profit of their souls, and be to them a present help in trouble.—Give us thankful hearts for all the mercies of this day; and watch over us amidst the dangers of the night. Preserve a sense of thy love upon our minds, and give us to have sweet and delightful fellowship with thee, when we lie down and when we rise up, and continually to long and thirst after thee, till we attain the full enjoyment of thee in a perpetual Sabbath: Hear and grant our requests, for the sake of Jesus Christ. *Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer for a Family, when any member of it is sick, proper for morning or evening.

O THOU infinitely great and glorious God, thou killest and makest alive.—Thou woundest and thy hands make whole; thou bringest down to the grave, and bringest back again. Thou dost according to thy will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay thy hand or say unto thee, What dost thou? yet righteous art thou in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works. Even when thou afflictest and caused trouble and heaviness to fall upon us, it is that we may learn righteousness from thy judgments, and receive profit from thy

thy correction. Wherefore, though thou hast now visited our house with sickness, and art calling us to humiliation for our sins, yet we would still speak good of thy name, and love and bless thee. We desire at this season to remember all the past mercies with which thou hast been pleased to bless us and our household. God forbid, that our present grief should make us unmindful of the constant benefits we have enjoyed. How long has each of our family laid down and risen up, gone out and come in in health, strength, and peace? How long has the candle of the Lord shone upon us without intermission? For these multiplied favors, blessed, O Lord, be thy good and holy name; since the smallest of benefits is more than we deserve, and the sharpest affliction less. For to us, on account of our transgressions, is most justly due indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish. Wherefore then should living men complain, men and transgressors, for the punishment of their sins? Shall we receive so much good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil; patiently and contentedly receive evil also? This temper we know, O Lord, is our bounden duty; O form it in us. And as in great compassion to us, thou hast opened a way of relief for us under every trouble, by directing, commanding, and encouraging us in all our afflictions to pour out our complaints unto thee, and tell thee of all

we fear and feel ; to thee, O Father of mercies, do we make our supplication at this time. O Lord, be not far from us. In intire submission to thy most wise and holy will, do we now earnestly pray for that person whose sickness fills us with so much concern. O look upon him (or her) in his low estate ; suffer not, we beseech thee, his disorder to proceed, and let not this sickness be unto death, but for the manifestation of thy grace towards us all. Thou knowest, Lord, his frame ; lay no more upon him than thou wilt enable him to bear with patience and quietness of mind. And, O thou great physician, without whom all others are of no value ; do thou direct to the most proper medicines, and bless the art of healing to his body, and our great comfort. In thy due time restore thy servant to health and strength again, that he may have a longer day of grace and salvation, prove more useful, and do more good in his generation. In the meantime, however thou shalt think fit to dispose of him, O sanctify unto him this affliction ; work in him deep humiliation for his sin ; bless him with repentance unto life ; enable him by faith to behold the Lamb of God, and to trust in the fountain opened in his blood, for the remission of sins, that, being justified through faith, he may have peace with God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Make all his bed
in

in his sickness, and let patience have its perfect work in his soul. Raise him up to praise thy name, to pay those vows he makes in trouble before the assembly of thy saints, and to walk in newness of life. But if thou dost not see fit to spare thy servant, whom we are now remembering before thee, O prepare every one of this family, according to our several relations, for the awful stroke. With respect to himself, if the time of his departure draweth nigh, O let his heart be comforted by thy promises in Christ, and taste that thou art gracious unto him. May his soul be safe and happy at the hour of death ; and in the great day of the Lord Jesus Christ, may he be found amongst those who died in him.

And help us all who are now in health, to improve this loud and solemn call to prepare for our own sickness and decease. Let us not abuse our bodily strength to encourage ourselves in sinful security and impenitence.—
 Give us always to be ready, by performing the will of our Lord, that whensoever he shall come, we may be found of him in peace, and enter into his joy : that whenever our health is turned into sickness, and our strength into weakness, and our ease into sharp pain, we may not be cast down or perplexed, but feel in our souls those supports and consolations, which the world can neither give, nor death itself take away.

Hear

Hear us, O Lord our God, in these our humble requests: forgive us our sins; and accept our persons and our services, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Family Thanksgiving for the Recovery of a sick Member thereof,

MOST gracious and holy, good and merciful God! We have heard, we have seen, we have experienced thy love. Blessed, for ever blessed be thy name, that instead of being known to us by the judgments our sins have deserved, thou art manifested to us as the God willing to forgive all our iniquities. Thou hast delivered our eyes from tears, and our hearts from anguish. Thy servant whom thou hast lately afflicted, is now a monument of thy sparing mercy. Thou hast chastened and corrected him (or her) but thou hast not delivered him over unto death. Thou, Lord, hast turned our mourning into joy, and our fears into songs of praise.

O may this thy servant, whom thou hast spared, love thee more, and walk more exactly before thee in the land of the living.—We beseech thee perfect all that concerns his recovery; and grant that this gracious interposition may properly affect both him and every one of us in this family. From henceforth may we all more intirely depend upon thee for the continuance and preservation of
our

our dearest earthly comforts : may we consider them as thy free gifts, O Lord, and know that thou alone makest every earthly blessing be to us what it is. And give us grace so to use and enjoy all our temporal comforts, as those who know the fashion of this world passeth away. Grant we may learn from this late affliction in our family, to live more like persons who are soon to be separated by death, and to give all diligence to grow rich towards God, that we may be better prepared for a breach in our family whenever it shall come. And whomsoever of us, O God, thou shalt be pleased to call away first, may we be ready to obey the summons ; and though parted for a season here, be joined again in heaven, and be all of us for ever with the Lord, and with one another.

That we may none of us fall short of so glorious an end, O grant us a clear knowledge of the excellency of our God, and a firmer dependence upon the word of thy grace. Grant us a stronger love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a greater resemblance of him : that each of us in our particular station may be zealous for God, full of mercy and justice towards men, and possess every temper whereby God can be glorified in us.

Fill our minds with a more chearful and lively sense of our obligations to thee, especially for this late additional mercy ; write
it,

it, we beseech thee, on our hearts, so that no temptation from without, or corruption from within, may make us ever act as if we forgot it.

And now, O Lord, we again present both ourselves and family, all we have and all we are, a lively sacrifice unto thee for all our remaining days. Be with us when we are passing through the valley of the shadow of death; may we then fear no evil, nor have cause to fear any. Guard us through the gloomy passage, and bring us safe to thine eternal kingdom and glory. We humbly ask all these blessings, though utterly unworthy ourselves of any notice, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who ever lives to make intercession for us. *Amen.*

A Morning Prayer for a private Person.

O Eternal and ever-blessed God! Thou art in thyself infinitely glorious, in the Son of thy love amazingly gracious. In all humility I bow before thee, adoring thy divine Majesty, by whose power I was brought into the world, and by whose providence I have been preserved to this moment. I acknowledge that I brought a sinful nature into the world with me, from whence all actual transgressions have flowed and proceeded, as impure streams from a polluted fountain.

fountain. O Lord, humble me, and that greatly, for my original corruption, for the follies of my childhood, for the vanities and impieties of my youth, and the transgressions and provocations of my riper years; give me a particular sight of them; work in my soul an ingenuous and godly sorrow for them, and an entire hatred and enmity against them: Accept of the death and sufferings of thy Son, as a full satisfaction of thy justice for all that wrong I have done to the holiness of thy law, and enable me by faith to repose the entire trust and confidence of my soul on the sufficiency of his merits. O let thy Holy Spirit, for the time to come, so direct, sanctify, and govern both my heart and life in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments, that in all my thoughts, words and works, I may ever seek thy honour and glory, and may so order my conversation aright, that at death I may see the salvation of God. Prepare me for a sick bed, and fit me for a dying hour: O let not God be a stranger, nor my conscience a terror to me when I come to die; but do thou mercifully assist and succour me in my last moments; "In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, Good Lord, deliver me," and conduct me safely to thine everlasting kingdom. I bless thy name, O Lord, for that good providence of thine which has

brought me to the light of another day; do thou so prevent me with thy grace, so direct and assist me by thy holy and good Spirit, that I may not this day run into any sin and temptation; that I may not follow nor be led by any worldly or carnal lusts; but be enabled in my place and station to perform my duty to thyself and my neighbour, with such care, fidelity, and chearfulness, as may be acceptable both to God and man. I humbly commend this church and nation to thy merciful care and protection. Let our gracious Sovereign live in thy sight, and rule in thy fear; and let all his subjects fear God, honour the King, and love one another. Assist all thy ministers in their hard and difficult work, and prosper their endeavours with thy blessing, particularly thy servant's who labours among us in thy word and doctrine. Pity all in an afflicted condition, pardon their sins, and supply their wants. Remember all my relations for good, requite the kindness of my friends, and forgive my enemies, and enable me to forgive them also. These mercies, with whatsoever else thou knowest to be needful for me and all mankind, I humbly beg in the name and mediation of my blessed Redeemer, saying as he hath taught me: *Our Father, &c.*

An Evening Prayer for a private Person.

MOST holy and ever-blessed Lord God! the Father of mercies, the Fountain of goodness, and the Author of all grace! I desire again this evening, to bow before thy Mercy-seat, to adore and praise thy glorious Majesty, for thy gracious care and providence over me the day past. Pardon, most merciful Father, I most humbly beseech thee, whatever sins I have committed, or whatever duties I have omitted this day, contrary to my resolutions and obligations; pity my weaknesses, and accept my sincere endeavors to serve and glorify thee. Wherein I have been wont to slip, Lord, help me to be more watchful; wherein I have been careless and negligent, let me use greater diligence and circumspection; help me more sensibly to groan under this body of sin which I carry about with me, and so interrupts me in thy service, "that when I would do good, evil is present with me." And O that the sense of the corruption which I find stirring in my soul, may cause me more earnestly to implore the help of thy blessed Spirit, which alone can enable me to mortify all my evil and corrupt affections, "to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Raise up my heart and my affections above

this world and the things below, and place them upon thyself, and the things that are above; help me daily to call to mind the things of eternity and another world, and to believe them as certainly as if I saw them with my bodily eyes. Hear, O Lord, and answer the supplications and prayers which have been put up unto thee by any of thine this day, on the behalf of this church and nation: Grant that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations. Secure the person of thy servant King George from all attempts of violence; and let all that are in authority under him execute judgment and justice impartially, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion and godliness. Let all that minister unto thee in holy things endeavor, both by the purity of their doctrine and the piety of their lives, to win many to a love of holiness and religion, that they may shine as the stars for ever and ever.—Pity all those who are in a worse condition than myself; supply their wants out of thy abundance, and work in me a readiness of disposition to administer to their necessities according to my ability. Accept my thankful returns to thy Majesty for all thy mercies, for the Fountain of them all, the holy Jesus; for all the invaluable benefits of his incarnation,

tion, death, passion, resurrection, ascension, and intercession; for the gift of thy Holy Spirit, for the light of thy glorious gospel, for all the comforts and conveniences of life afforded to me, which many better than myself are deprived of; for thy watchful care and good hand of Providence over me this day. Receive me into thy protection this night, sanctify my rest, and keep me from sinning against thee upon my bed; let the natural repose of my body put me in mind, that ere long I must sleep in the bosom of the grave, and wake no more till the morning of the resurrection; for which solemn hour, good Lord, prepare and fit me and all mankind, by a renewed frame of heart, and a religious course of life, for thy mercies sake in Christ Jesus, who hath both directed and commanded me when I pray to say, *Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer for one convinced of Sin.

GOD, be merciful to me a sinner: a sinner beyond expression! How shall I lift up mine eyes towards thee, O thou most Holy, or take thy name within my polluted lips! O Lord, thou needest not my confession to inform thee, for thine eye hath been ever upon my path; and of the things that have come into my mind, thou hast
known

known every one of them. The vanity of my childhood, the folly of my youth, the obstinacy and rebellion of my riper years, are all written in thy book. Alas ! thou knowest I was conceived in sin, and have lived in sin ever since I was born : all thy commandments have I broken, all thy mercies have I abused, trifled with thy patience, resisted thy Spirit, and rejected thy gospel, times without number.

So foolish and ignorant, so stupid and hardened, unthankful and unfaithful have I been ; a transgressor from the womb : such has been my life. What then must my heart be, the fountain from whence all these streams of bitterness have flowed ? O Lord, thou hast said it, and I cannot deny it, my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; I am wholly defiled. There is no sound part in me. I am full of pride and ignorance, unbelief and self-will ; my boasted strength is weakness, and my best righteousness as an unclean thing before thee. I owe thee ten thousand talents, but have nothing to pay. I am bound to a perfect obedience, but I cannot perform. O wretched man, who shall deliver me ? Wherewithal shall I come before the most high God ? Will sighs, or tears, or promises answer the demands of thy law, satisfy thy justice, and avert thy righteous anger ? or where shall I hide my
guilty

guilty head ? O Lord, my flesh trembleth, my heart faileth before thee. I am afraid of thy judgments. I have deserved them all ; and shouldst thou now pour forth thy wrath upon me unto the uttermost, even in the midst of my sufferings, I must own thy justice. Shouldst thou shut out my prayers, and say, Depart, thou cursed, into everlasting fire, I must be dumb. But, O Lord, though I have thus destroyed myself, is there no help, no hope in thee ? Hast thou not revealed thyself in thy word, as “ The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin ? ” And hast thou not commended thy love to poor lost sinners, in giving thine only Son to be the propitiation for sin ? Hath not thy kind Providence put thy gospel into my hands, to prevent my sinking into despair ? Thou hast been pleased to inform me of the sinless life and meritorious death of thy only begotten Son, of the grace of his heart to the chief of sinners, and the intercession he ever lives to make for the worst that come to thee by him : and though it is amongst my most abominable sins, and the cause of them, that I so long slighted this record of thy Son, I now see and feel, that except he saves me, I must undoubtedly perish for ever. All that believe
in

in him he will save; and I am taught in thy word that faith is thy gift, and of thy operation in the soul. O bestow and work in me the work of faith with power, I beseech thee, unworthy as I am. Enable me to behold the suffering wounded Lamb of God, who poured forth his soul an offering for transgressors. O help me to believe that he has his own self; bore my sins on his own body on the tree; that he has delivered me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me. O let me feel the powerful efficacy of that blood which cleanseth from all sin. O let that Spirit which Jesus is exalted to bestow, testify of him to me, and glorify him in my eyes, that my troubled conscience may enjoy peace, and my soul find rest in Christ. Gird me with strength for thy blessed service, and redeem me by thy mighty grace, from the power of all iniquity, from the hands of all my enemies, that I may live devoted to thee for ever. O spare me, good Lord, that I may be a monument of the riches of thy mercy, and an instrument of spreading thy praise, who art just, and yet the justifier of the sinner and the ungodly, through him whom thou hast held forth to be a propitiation for sin through faith in his blood. *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer for the Increase of Faith in Christ.

ENLARGE, I beseech thee, O Lord my God, my narrow heart, to receive thy precious promises, in all their power and fulness. If the faint hope I already have that thou art my reconciled Father, was not founded upon thy own faithful word, it would indeed be presumption to ask of thee to confirm it to a full assurance. But since thou hast given to them that believe exceeding great and precious promises, that they might be partakers of a divine nature; and by thy immutable word and oath, hast provided that all who fly to Jesus Christ for refuge, should have strong consolation, O give me to enjoy the inestimable benefit. Lord, I do believe, help thou mine unbelief. Adored be thy free grace, for what thou hast already done; but, O perfect thy work in me: make me strong in faith, that on all occasions I may give glory to God. Thou hast shewn me something of my own misery. I see, I feel myself a lost creature, without thy salvation. — Thou hast also given me some understanding to know him that is true, even the Almighty Saviour; and every hope of mercy not founded upon him, I renounce. I have cast myself at his feet, and said, Lord, save me, or I perish. I cannot doubt his power, but, O forgive me, that I so often doubt his

M m

love

love and willingness to save such as I am, though I know for this purpose he appeared in the form of a servant, and gave up the Ghost in groans and agonies, and bled upon the cross.

O let me know in whom I have believed, so as no more to doubt, nor to be in darkness. Persuade me fully of my own sincerity in intrusting my dearest concerns into the hands of Christ, and of his willingness and ability to keep that which I have committed to him against the great day ; to preserve me from falling, to support me under all my trials, to defend me against all my enemies through this state of warfare, and at length to present me faultless before thy glorious presence with exceeding joy.

Fain would I rely upon thy faithful promises ; fain would I rejoice in hope ; but, alas ! an evil heart of unbelief deprives me of those comforts and privileges provided in the gospel for returning sinners. Let the Sun of righteousness shine forth with healing in his beams, scattering the mists and clouds which hang upon my mind. Give me grace to seek this blessing, by diligently reading thy holy word, by being instant in prayer, constant in the use of all ordinances, and circumspect in all my conversation. Let me not remain ignorant of the devices of Satan, that he may neither terrify me by his malicious suggestions,

ons, nor seduce me under the appearances of an angel of light, to depart one step from the rule of thy word, either to do what thou hast not commanded, or to expect what thou hast not promised. But having my heart, my hope, my eye fixed upon thee alone, may I chearfully wait for the accomplishment of all the good, both in time and in eternity, promised to them that are in Christ Jesus. I ask this in his name. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Repentance.

GLORY be to thee, O Lord God almighty and everlasting, for exalting thine only begotten Son to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins to us miserable offenders, who have no power of ourselves truly to repent.

Make us, we beseech thee, O God, duly sensible of this thy great mercy, and of our absolute need of it, that neither the consciousness of our guilt may deter us from imploring thy pardon, nor the love of sin delude us to fancy we can cast away our transgressions and repent whenever we will. O convince us that we cannot turn and prepare ourselves by our natural strength to call upon God. Save us from flattering ourselves, as we are prone to do, that sickness or pain, adversity or the approach of death, can of

themselves dispose us to a repentance not to be repented of. Give us an understanding to know, that if we are no longer hardened in sin, it is because the Lord maketh our hearts soft; if we are brought to God and accepted of him, may we most thankfully acknowledge, that it is because the Lord hath granted us repentance unto life. And never, O God ! let the pride of our own hearts, or the erroneous judgment of the world, lead us to deny or to forget, that every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; who of his own will begets sons and daughters to himself with the word of truth.

And as thou, O Lord God ! hast commanded all men every where to repent, and declared, that except we repent we must perish, O suffer not, we beseech thee, our pride to lead us to justify ourselves, as the Scribes and Pharisees did of old, refusing to be baptised with the baptism of repentance. O let not any benefits we may have enjoyed from education, through thy preventing or restraining grace, puff us up to think we need no repentance. Let not the commendations of men, nor any excellencies we possess in their opinion, seduce us to imagine we need not feel all the workings of a truly contrite heart, or prompt us to say, because we are innocent, therefore

therefore shall wrath be turned away from us: From such blindness and hardness of heart, good Lord, deliver us; Suppress it in its first risings; convince us there is no greater provocation in thy sight than for man, that is born of a woman, to exalt himself— than to say, I am clean without transgression; I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me, for which I ought to mourn and repent before God.

And do thou, who art a God of pity, instruct us by thy Spirit, that we may perfectly distinguish between true repentance and every false appearance of this precious grace. Give us to know, that freedom from gross iniquities is not sufficient proof that we are passed from death unto life, and numbered by thee our God, amongst repenting sinners. Let no other evidence satisfy us that we are ourselves of that happy number, than the inward experience of our vileness and condemnation for sin; nothing but the loathing of ourselves, for the evil of our ways and of our doings; nothing but the forsaking of every sin, and feeling within ourselves a heart humbled for our transgressions, and depending wholly for remission of sins on the blood of thy Son. O may all these inseparable properties of true repentance be found in us; may they always appear to have influence on our tempers and practice, proclaiming to all
about

about us, that we are universally changed and made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And as we pray thus, O Lord! for the blessing and gift of true repentance for ourselves, so do we intreat thee to have mercy upon all who are in the misery and under the anguish of a wounded spirit. Lead them to a complete repentance; give them beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may flourish as trees of the Lord's planting, that he may be glorified. Pity those who are putting off their repentance to a sick bed, and a dying hour; who, whilst they are acknowledging they cannot but perish without they repent, love their sin so desperately as to put off calling upon their God, to an hour that they cannot be sure of. O convince them of their madness, and bring them to the right use of their reason, and the calls of thy word; that they may make haste to fly for refuge whilst it is the accepted time, and the day of salvation.

Finally, we beseech thee, O God, for thy own name's sake, and for thy truth's sake, lift up by thy Spirit, a standard against the horrible profaneness, which is come in upon our land like a flood: take away from the wicked the lie in their right hand, who imagine that it shall be well with them in eternity, even though they die without true and faithful repentance.

Pull

Pull down, O God ! even to the ground, this strong hold of thine enemies ; may none cry to themselves, peace and safety, till they are alive from the dead, and till their iniquity is purged ; till they walk as dear obedient children by faith in Christ Jesus.

These spiritual and everlasting mercies we implore from thee, O God of all grace ! in dependence upon his all-sufficient merits, and never-ceasing intercession, who has commanded repentance and remission of sins to be preached in his name to every creature, even Jesus Christ the righteous. *Amen.*

A Prayer when under the Pressure of some heavy Affliction.

O Thou most holy and righteous God, who orderest all things in heaven and in earth, and with the greatest tenderness dost hear the cries of all who put their trust in thee through Jesus Christ ; I believe, Lord, help my unbelief, that in wisdom, mercy, and holiness thou dost appoint unto me every circumstance of my condition. I desire to look through all second causes to thee, O Lord God, who makest them merely instruments to do thy will, and execute thy purpose respecting the children of men. O thou infinitely wise and gracious Governor of the world, often have I said, *Thy will be done.*—

But

But now thou art pleased to afflict me, I find my nature ready to shrink back, and to be clamorous or fretful under the sacred, but painful cross. What I have often so solemnly repeated, I am strongly tempted to unsay; and to wish my own will, and not thine, was to take place. Make speed, O God of my salvation, and help me to deny myself, to bow down in free and full submission to thy appointment of my condition.—Bring powerfully to my remembrance, I beseech thee, what my mouth hath so often declared in thy presence, that I have deserved all the plagues written in the book of thy law: and that it is mere mercy and rich grace which have kept me from the wages due to my sin, from weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth in torment. Whilst thou art therefore smiting me, O thou righteous Judge of all the earth, give me an heart unfeignedly to adore thy mercy, that instead of the scourge with which I am now corrected for my profit, thou hast not long since given a commission to the sword of vengeance to do all its dreadful work upon me. O fill my soul with a perfect acquiescence under this affliction, by convincing me that thou, and thou alone, O God, knowest what manner of correction I need. Thy eye discovers the folly, the perverseness, and many sinful disorders of my soul, and canst alone adapt a remedy to the disease.

disease. O that I might obtain grace, therefore, to remain in meek subjection to the Father of spirits, and to bear the stroke of thy hand, not merely because none can oppose thy will, but because the stroke is given to heal and bless. Take away from me all thoughts that are without understanding, and so busy to press into my mind, raising objections against this particular way in which I am tried. Make me to believe it is the very affliction proper for the particular state of my soul. And, in the midst of my troubles, let thy comforts, O Lord, refresh my heart, and relieve the weariness and pains of nature, by the supernatural supports of thy Grace and Spirit. Thy mercies are not restrained, neither is thy hand waxed short; what thou hast done for thousands of the sons and daughters of affliction, do for me, even for me, O my God. If my heart be less tender, less sensible, thou canst cure that evil, and make my present affliction the means of curing it.—Thus, O Lord, let it be; and at length in thy due time, and in the way which thou shalt choose, send forth deliverance for me, and shew me thy marvellous loving-kindness; for I well know how dark soever this night of affliction seems, if thou sayest, Let there be light, there shall be light. O let me patiently wait, and quietly hope, till that time

of mercy come. Let me be much more concerned to have my affliction sanctified than removed. Number me, O Lord, amongst the happy persons, whom whilst thou chastenest, thou teachest out of thy law. Shew me, I beseech thee, wherefore thou contendest with me; and whilst I am passing through the furnace of affliction, O let it purge away my dross, and take away all my iniquity.— In thy presence, and under the supports of thy grace, I can bear any thing, and am willing to bear, if I may grow more conformable to thy will, and more largely partake of thy holiness. As my foolish heart is ready to grow fond of this earth, O let the disappointments and afflictions I meet with in it, loosen my affections, and put an end to all my sinful attachments to any thing below. O teach my soul to receive every trouble as a call to cease from expecting any thing from the creature, and to be preparing for that hour which shall put an end to all the sorrows and trials of the righteous, and give them an entrance into the everlasting kingdom through the blood of the Lamb, in which they wash their robes white. O Lord, hear; O Lord, perform and do; defer not, I beseech thee, lest my spirit faint before thee, and the flesh which thou hast made. *Amen.*

A Prayer

*A Prayer for a Person under deep Melancholy
and Dejection of Spirits.*

O Most good and gracious Lord, thou knowest our frame, and art a God full of compassion to pity and relieve thy servants under their trouble and oppression. Look down, we humbly beseech thee, with thy wonted pity, and remember in tender mercy the work of thy hands, our disconsolate friend, this troubled soul, that is even distracted in suffering thy terrors; thy wrath lies hard upon *him*, and all thy waves are gone over *him*; they disturb *his* peace, oppress *his* mind, and make *him* unfit rightly to use *his* reason, or discharge *his* duty. O thou that spakest the winds and waves into obedience and calmness, settle and quiet *his* discomposed thoughts; speak peace and satisfaction to *his* troubled mind, and give *him* comfort and sure confidence in the sense of thy pardon and love. Lord, help *his* unbelief, and increase *his* faith. Though *he* now walks in the valley and shadow of death, let *thy rod and thy staff* comfort him. Let *him* trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon *his* God. In the multitude of the thoughts and sorrows that *he* hath in *his* heart, O let thy comfort come in to refresh *his* soul. Be thou pleased, Lord, to deliver and ease *him* of the load that lies upon *his* spirit: and let in a beam of thy heavenly light

to scatter and dispel all the clouds and darkness, in which *his* mind is wrapt up. O direct the means most proper for *his* help, and bless and prosper them so, that they may be effectual to promote *his* recovery out of this sad and doleful estate. Incline *his* ears to wholesome counsels, and fashion *his* heart to receive due impressions: O gracious Father, pity *his* frailty, and forgive *his* sin: heal *him*, O Lord, both in soul and body, and rebuke *his* distemper so, that *his* disquieted soul may return to its rest. O raise *him* up, and make *him* whole; yea, make haste, O Lord, to shew such mercy upon *him*, even for thine own mercies sake, in Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer in Time of Temptation.

ALmighty God, and most merciful Father, who art greater than all things, send down thy help from above, and deliver me from the temptations that now attack me; and as I put my trust in thee, O let me never be put to confusion, nor suffer me to be tempted above that I am able to bear; but make me a way to escape, that I may not sin against thy divine Majesty. Make me seriously to consider the great folly and danger of sin; that its pleasures are short, but that its punishments are endless and intolerable; that

no

no satisfaction can compare with the joys of a good conscience, nor is any trouble like that of a wounded spirit. Give me a clear idea of the terrible state of those who fall under the rod of thy displeasure. Convince my conscience of the sinfulness of what I am now tempted unto, and shew me its contradiction to thy will and my baptismal vows. Give me, I pray thee, the light of thy word, that I may not be deceived by this wicked world, but certainly know, that how pleasant soever it may now appear, there will come a time, when this and all other enticements of this world will appear vain and contemptible: a time when all workers of iniquity shall be destroyed, and when a crown of righteousness shall be given to them who have fought the good fight, and kept the faith unto the end. Grant therefore that the mighty power of thy grace may so raise my courage, and strengthen my faith, that nothing may stop me in my christian warfare; but that fighting manfully under Christ's banner, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, I may at last triumph with him in his heavenly kingdom; to whom, with thee, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer before the Sacrament.

O Eternal and ever-glorious God! who dwellest in the highest heavens, and also in the humble, lowly, and contrite heart; in a deep sense of thy adorable excellencies, and of my own vileness and unworthiness, I come unto thee, beseeching thee, for the sake of thy dear Son, to accept of me, a poor prodigal, now returning to thee, and casting myself at thy feet, who am by nature a child of wrath, by practice a child of disobedience, and therefore liable and obnoxious to thine everlasting wrath: But thou, of thine infinite goodness hast promised me thy favor and friendship in Christ, if at the call and invitation of thy gospel I will accept the merit of his death, and submit to the authority of his laws, and proclaim and prosecute an open and irreconcilable war against all known sins, the enemies of thy glory, and disturbers of my peace. O Lord, I heartily lament them, and from the bottom of my soul I renounce them all, whether in thought, word, or deed, committed against thy divine Majesty, faithfully covenanting with thee, for the time to come, not to allow myself in any known sin, but to use all those means which I find prescribed by thee in thy word for my spiritual advantage, and for the death and destruction of all my corruptions. O thou God and Father of heaven,

ven, whose thoughts of mercy towards me have been from everlasting, I dedicate myself, soul, body and spirit, to thy service and glory, as a small return of duty and thanksgiving for thy wonderful love, promising to serve thee in righteousness and true holiness all the days of my life. O thou blessed Jesus ! the precious Lamb of God, whose Soul was made an offering for sin, and who hast declared thy readiness to receive and embrace repenting and returning sinners, receive me graciously who am weary and heavy laden with the burden of my sins, and humbly desire by faith to approach unto thee. I own myself unworthy to gather up the crumbs that fall from thy table, much more unworthy to be entertained at it ; but seeing such is thy condescending grace and love to invite me to the participation of thyself, I do here with all humility accept thee for my Lord and Saviour, for my King, Priest, and Prophet : O permit me to come to thy holy table, to ratify this engagement. And, O thou holy and good Spirit, the sanctifier and comforter of thy church and children ! enable me to resign myself entirely unto the guidance and dominion of thy grace, that I may evermore hereafter walk in the Spirit, and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. And now that I am going to thy holy table, in obedience to my Lord's command, to commemorate his dying love, vouchsafe thy gracious presence

presence with me, and render thyself powerfully present to my mind and thoughts: O help me, that I may attend my Lord without distraction: Enable me to give up myself an holy and acceptable sacrifice to my Redeemer, who has given himself a meritorious sacrifice for my redemption. O help me to follow my blessed Lord's example, and to tread in the steps of his most holy life. Let me admire and imitate his condescending humility, his fervent charity, his patience under sufferings, his readiness to forgive injuries; and let the same mind ever be in me, which was also in Christ Jesus; that having been a welcome guest at thy table here on earth, I may hereafter be adjudged worthy to be called to the supper of the Lamb, and may feast with my blessed Redeemer in his everlasting kingdom. All which I ask in the name, and through the mediation of Jesus Christ, saying, *Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer after the Sacrament.

FOR ever blessed be thy great, thy glorious, and thy holy name, O Lord, for all the unspeakable favors and benefits vouchsafed to me, and to all mankind; particularly for thy invaluable love in giving thy dear Son to die for me as a sacrifice, and to be my spiritual food and sustenance in the holy Sacrament.

ment. Lord, who, and what am I, that thou hast been pleased to admit me this day into thy presence, to renew my covenant with thee, which I have so often and so perversly broken before thee ! I have once more lifted up my hands to the most high God, and sworn allegiance to my Sovereign and my Saviour ; O keep it in the purpose of my heart for ever to continue stedfast in thy covenant ; and let neither the smiles of a flattering world allure me, nor the frowns, threats, and terrors of an angry world be ever able to drive me from my duty, or hinder me in the way of well-doing. Holy Father, accept, I beseech thee, of that renewed dedication which I have made of myself this day unto thee, even of my whole man, soul, body and spirit, to thy service and honor. And now, glory be to thee, O God the Father, whom I shall from this day forward with an humble expectation look up unto, as my Father and God in covenant ; glory be to thee, O God the Son, who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in thine own blood, and art now become my Saviour, my Justifier and Redeemer : Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, who hast by the power of thy victorious grace overcome the obstinacy of my heart, and turned it from sin to God. O Lord God ! Thou hast been pleased to permit me to renew my baptismal

O o

covenant ;

covenant ; O grant me the assistance of thy grace, that I may be faithful to that covenant ; for truly I am thy servant, heartily devoted to thy fear ; O let me never more start aside from my vows like a broken bow, but give me such a steadfastness and stability of mind, such a firmness and fixedness of resolution, that my after conversation may be suitable both to my present profession and future expectation ; that so I may in all companies, and in all conditions, walk worthy of him that has called me to his kingdom and glory. And let the sense of my Redeemer's love this day to me, enflame my heart with a never-failing charity to all mankind, whom I pray God to do good unto, especially to his church and to these nations, and to work in the minds of all Christians a dread of his holy name.—Grant that they may honor and obey their superiors both in church and state : Give them an unfeigned charity one towards another.—All which mercies I humbly beg in the name of the holy Jesus, saying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A Prayer

A Prayer for a Child, to be used Morning and Evening.

A Lmighty God, who madeſt me and haſt preſerved me to this hour, I praiſe and glorify thy name for all thy mercies. Look graciously upon me, and bleſs me, I humbly beſeech thee; pardon all my ſins, and give me grace to remember and put in practice my baptiſmal vow, by “renouncing the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh.” O do thou incline my heart to that which is good; give me grace to fear thee, and to keep thy commandments make me [*dutiful to my father and mother, loving to my brothers and ſiſters*] obedient to my teachers, humble and reverent to all my betters, meek and courteous to all people.

Preſerve me from bearing malice, or hatred in my heart, from lying and ſtealing, and from all evil thoughts, words, and actions.— Guide me by thy holy Spirit, that I may live to thy glory, and hereafter obtain everlaſting life.

Lord, bleſs all my relations and friends, and ſave and defend them and me from all dangers [*this day or night*] and evermore, thro’ Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A Prayer to be used before the Reading of God's Word.

ALmighty and most merciful God, the Fountain of all wisdom, and the Author of everlasting life; I desire from my heart to bless, and praise, and adore thy holy name, that thou hast been graciously pleased to reveal to us the way of salvation, in thy holy scriptures.—With unfeigned sorrow and concern I confess the ignorance, darkness, and blindness, of my fallen nature.—Yea, that I am (by nature) not only ignorant of the things of God, but unwilling also and averse to be taught of thee. The writings of men, which often tend to alienate our affections from heavenly things, I have frequently read for pleasure and knowledge; but Oh! how little have I studied thy blessed word for instruction and edification! How little has thy holy, good, and righteous law been my meditation and my delight! God be merciful to me a miserable sinner, for Jesus Christ's sake. Forgive my neglect of reading; forgive my carelessness in reading thy word. And through his mediation in whom thou art well-pleased, grant me the assistance of thy holy Spirit, that I may be inclined to hunger and thirst more and more after thy heavenly wisdom and righteousness. Root out of me all that pride, and prejudice,
and

and opposition to the truth, which remain in my carnal mind; and give me, O give me, merciful God, that humble spirit, which may make me willing to sit at the feet of Jesus my Saviour to be taught of him in all things. Enable me to lay aside all hastiness of spirit, and every sinful desire; and may I always receive with meekness the ingrafted word, assuredly believing that it is able to save my soul. O gracious God, be thou pleased to open my understanding to comprehend thy saving truths; and above all, fix them deeply and powerfully upon my heart. Thou hast told us, that thy divine word is quick and powerful, and mighty to pull down the strong holds of sin and satan, and to bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. O may it be thus quick and powerful in my soul! May it be so closely applied to my conscience, by thy good Spirit, that I may hate whatever it forbids, and love whatever it commands. And may I have such a sight of thy free grace and goodness in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ; and of his readiness to receive and bless every penitent sinner, that I may thankfully receive him, at all times, as my only Saviour, and follow him as my Lord and Master; in steadfast hope of that life and immortality, which he has brought to light by the gospel. These things I beg of thee, O God, my heavenly Father,

Father, encouraged by the abundant manifestations which thou hast given us of thy mercy and love. Hear, O Lord, my imperfect petitions; and grant, according to thy promise, that I may receive what I have asked, and find what I have sought, through Jesus Christ, our only Advocate and Redeemer—Lord Jesus, intercede for me, and offer up my prayer at the throne of grace; which I conclude in thy name and words: *Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer to be used after the Reading of God's Word.

O Most blessed God, who in great mercy hast given thy holy word to be a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths; how shall we sufficiently love and adore thee for thine inestimable gift! I cannot praise thee, O my God, as I ought to do; but I desire to bless and praise thee as well as I am able: O do thou enable me to praise thee more and more. I desire with a thankful heart to bless thy name for the opportunity thou hast now given me of reading thy word: For thy dear Son's sake, strengthen me with might by thy Spirit, in the inner man, that I may lay up what I have read, in my heart. O write and engrave it upon my memory, that I may faithfully retain every part of it? and may I so carefully meditate upon, and digest it, that

i

it may be food and nourishment to my soul ; that I may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.— Incline me, O Lord, seriously to examine my life and conversation by the rule of thy revealed will. May I be truly humbled before thee for whatsoever I have done amiss : May I be brought to see and feel more clearly day by day my guilt, helplessness, and misery ; and be stirred up to apply to thee with more stedfast faith in Jesus Christ my Saviour ; for forgiveness, power, and eternal salvation ; and from a sense of its unspeakable benefit to my own soul, may I be inclined also to speak of thy truth, and of thy salvation, to those among whom I have my conversation in the world. Let me not fear the face of man, or ever be ashamed of thee and of thy words ; nor let any temptation of worldly honor or profit persuade me to keep back what may tend to the salvation of another's soul. Grant, O heavenly Father, that such may be the blessed effects of my reading the holy Scriptures, that following thy dear Son, who is the way, the truth, and the life, I may enjoy the comforts of thy Spirit here, and thy inconceivable glories hereafter, through his merits and mediation.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A Prayer

A Prayer to be used before the Hearing of God's Word.

O God, our heavenly Father, who hast been graciously pleased to appoint ministers and stewards of thy word, who may make known unto fallen man the way of thy great salvation; I humbly beseech thee to give them all, and especially those under whose ministry thy providence hast placed me, grace to preach boldly the truth as it is in Jesus.—May thy holy Spirit be ever with them to enlighten, direct, and animate them in the execution of their important trust. Impress deeply upon their souls, the thoughts of those dreadful judgments which are denounced against the careless and wicked steward, and of those glorious blessings, which shall be their portion who turn many to righteousness. O Lord, be present with them; that they may take heed unto themselves, and to their doctrine; that so they may both save themselves and them that hear them. Convince them, that from thee alone, all their help cometh; and incline them to apply to thee continually in fervent prayer, that thy strength may be made perfect in their weakness. And since thou hast commanded that the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and the people should hear the law at their mouths; give me, O my God, and all the hearers of thy holy word,
humble

humble and teachable minds : Give us grace to bear with patience, and carefully to search and examine ourselves, when they are laying open the corruption and deceitfulness of the heart of man. And may we receive with all thankfulness and joy, the glad tidings of thy pardoning mercy in Christ Jesus, and the gracious offers of thy holy Spirit. May we receive the Lord Jesus as a Prophet to instruct, our Priest to make atonement and intercession for, and our King to rule over, and save us ; and being rooted and grounded in him, may we live as becomes his disciples, in all holiness and godly conversation.

Take out of us the stony heart, and give us an heart of flesh, which may feel the force and efficacy of thy divine word. Teach us to receive it, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in them that believe. Remove from us every degree of prejudice ; and fill us with that meek and quiet spirit, that honest and good heart, on which the heavenly seed may take root, and flourish, and bring forth fruit an hundred fold. Grant these my requests, O merciful Father, for thy beloved Son's sake ; and pardon the iniquity of thy servant, and all my unfruitfulness hitherto under the means of grace I have enjoyed. I unfeignedly bless thee for thy mercies and loving-kindness towards me. Lord help me from henceforth

to walk worthy of thy distinguishing mercies, and of the light and advantages thou bestowest upon me; help me to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. I commit myself into thy hands, O Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ; desiring to ascribe all honor, praise and glory to the ever-blessed Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, now and for evermore.—*Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer to be used after the Hearing of God's Word.

O Most merciful and most gracious Lord God, I thy unworthy servant again approach the throne of thy grace, in the name of our great Mediator Jesus Christ, desiring with a thankful heart to magnify thy mercy for the many opportunities thou affordest me of hearing thy holy word.

What am I, O Lord, that thou shouldest thus vouchsafe to speak to me by thy stewards and ambassadors, to call me to the knowledge of salvation, and to the hope of thy glory.—Lord, I am sinful dust and ashes; I have shamefully refused to hearken when thou hast called, and have frequently turned away mine ear from thy reproofs. I deserve no favor or mercy from thee; but thou art all compassion and love; and in infinite and undeserved mercy, shewest loving-kindness to the most unworthy.

unworthy. O, may a sense of thy goodness and love, make the deepest impression on my mind; and whenever thou speakest, may I thy servant, humbly and gladly hear, and lay up thy words in my heart. Thou hast said, That thy word shall not return unto thee void: Let this be fulfilled unto me, and all the hearers of thy word this day; may it work in us repentance, faith, and holy obedience; may we be not only hearers, but doers of it; may it be unto us the favor of life, unto everlasting life. O let not the world, the flesh, or the devil, have power to banish from our minds, any of the good impressions that have been wrought in our souls; but may thy good Spirit effectually fix and support them, and keep us steadfast in thy faith and fear. And, O God of all power and grace, be thou pleased to make known the saving truths of thy gospel throughout the world. Raise up faithful, able, and zealous preachers of thy word; and assist and defend them in the work to which thou appointest them. Enable them by thy mighty power, to speak to the conviction of every sinner, and to the comfort and edification of thy people. May the doctrine they deliver go forth with such efficacy, that the eyes of the spiritually blind may be opened to see the riches of thy grace; the careless and profane awakened to a sense of their inexpressible danger; and the formal be stirred up

to seek for the life and power of godliness in their souls. O thou gracious Father in Christ Jesus, make their words powerful to bring all as guilty, helpless creatures to Jesus Christ; and so gentle and affectionate as to heal the broken-hearted, and fill us with more fervent desires after meekness, holiness, and love. We acknowledge that it is thou who givest the increase to the seed sown; give, we beseech thee, a plentiful increase; and still continue to us the light of the gospel; and always grant us the blessing of such ministers who may rightly divide the word of truth; who through evil report and good report may still, with thy blessed Apostle, Saint Paul, determine to know nothing among us but Jesus Christ and him crucified; that being rooted and grounded in him, and established in that faith, which worketh by love in all holy obedience, we may, finally, with thy faithful servants gone before us; attain that crown of glory, which thy bountiful mercy has laid up for them that love thee, through Jesus Christ, our only Advocate and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a private Person going a Journey.

THINE is the power, O Lord, and the dominion in all places; both at home and abroad all our safety standeth in thy protection and mercy: To thee therefore do I

now

now direct my prayer, called by my necessary business from my own habitation. Many, I know, and peculiar are the dangers, both with respect to body and soul, to which travellers are exposed; and by his own strength or wisdom no man is able to avoid them.— Compass me therefore about with thy favor, O God, as with a shield; guard both my person and property from the fons of violence and blood; preserve my body in health and strength; and as I shall be much alone by the way, grant that I may reflect and consider much on thy truth, thy grace, and salvation, and be able to say, I am not alone, but the Father, Son, and Spirit, by their sacred influences, are with me. Whatever company I come into, preserve me from complying with any sollicitations to sin, and from being at all conformable to the manners of the profane: And whatever business I have to transact, give me grace to do it, with all good conscience, abhorring deceit, fraud, and lying.

For all these mercies I make my prayer unto thee, the God of my life, and in faith I commend myself into thy hands, beseeching thee that no evil may befall me. And after all my travels here, bring me, O my heavenly Father, at last to thy holy hill, through the greatness of thy mercy to me in thy dear Son and my only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Thanks-

A Thanksgiving for a Person after a safe journey.

O My most merciful and gracious God, I desire to take this first opportunity of returning to thee my most hearty thanks for this fresh instance of thy love to me, manifested through my whole journey. Thou hast preserved me from every peril and sad accident to which I was exposed. Thou hast surrounded me with blessings on every side.—I might now have been groaning under the pain of broken bones, of bruised limbs, or other terrible disasters; yea, I might suddenly have been dashed in pieces on the ground, or perished far from all help, and my friends and family been shocked with the doleful tidings. But instead of these miseries, thou hast kept me in safety; thou hast brought me to see my habitation in peace, and all things here in prosperity. Every day thy mercy and goodness, O Lord, did prevent and follow me. O how unwearied is thy bounty towards such polluted and depraved creatures as we are! And now grant, I beseech thee, that the sense of thy love to me may create in me such love for thy name, and for whatsoever thou dost command, that I may chearfully and with full purpose of heart devote myself to thy service, and serve thee with all my strength.—Grant me both this and every other blessing I need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer before expounding the Holy Scriptures.

O Thou great and gracious God, who knowest that since man's shameful fall, darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people; we thy poor unworthy creatures here assembled, deeply sensible of this, humbly beseech thee, to give unto us true wisdom, that wisdom which cometh from above. We thank thee, O Lord, for all the innumerable mercies and favors which thou hast bestowed upon us; but especially for the inestimable blessing of redemption, by our Lord Jesus Christ; and for the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in him. —O grant that thy holy Word may prove a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto all our paths. To this end we now humbly and earnestly intreat thee to give us more and more of thy Holy Spirit, to lead us into the true knowledge of thy revealed will. —Thou knowest, O Lord, that the natural man, be he ever so wise or learned, cannot receive or know spiritual things, because they are spiritually discerned. —Fully convinced of this, we humbly beseech thee, to give us the enlightening influences of the Holy Ghost, to lead us to the knowledge of all things that belong to our everlasting peace. Hast thou not graciously promised, that all thy children shall

shall be taught of thee? Lord, we pray thee to make us all thy children by adoption and grace, and then fulfil this thy gracious promise to us; O grant that we may truly know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.—O that it may please thee to illuminate all bishops, priests, and deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of thy word, and that both by their preaching and living, they may set it forth, and shew it accordingly.—Give to all thy people seeing eyes, hearing ears, and understanding hearts: Grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also, may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.—Lord, bless this sacred and solemn exercise on which we are about to enter, both to pastor and people. Thou hast promised to be with thy ministers always; let thy unworthy servant here before thee now, experience the accomplishment of this blessed promise. O do thou graft in his heart a true love both to thee, and thy flock committed to his charge.—Do thou enable him rightly to divide the word of truth, and to expound the Scriptures faithfully, clearly, and profitably, to all who hear him: And grant to all thy people here present, increase of grace, that they may meekly hear thy holy word, carefully attend to it, and treasure it up in their hearts, and
enable

enable them to bring forth the good fruits of the Spirit.—Grant that they may not be hearers of thy word only, but doers also, daily growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer after expounding the Holy Scriptures.

O Gracious God, our Almighty and most merciful Father, who hast been pleased of thine infinite wisdom and goodness to appoint ministers to instruct thy people, and to feed them with the Bread of Life; we humbly beseech thee to give a blessing to their labours; without this we are well assured that all will be in vain—Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is thou only, O God, canst give the increase, and cause the seed of thy holy word to take root downward, and bear fruit upward.—But since thou hast told us that thy word shall be as the rain that cometh down from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it fruitful; and hast further promised that it shall not return unto thee void, but that it shall accomplish thy holy will and purpose in the thing whereto thou sendest it; we, thy unworthy servants, relying on this thy gracious promise, humbly presume to plead it before thee, and to in-

Q 9

treat

treat thee now to fulfil it.—Thy word has *now* been delivered and received: But the blessing is in thy hands, O our God; it is thou, and thou alone that canst make it prosperous and successful to the gaining and saving of immortal souls.—O grant that it may sink deep into all our hearts, and there abide with a powerful influence on us—May it build us up in our most holy faith, and promote our growth in grace, and in all holiness of life.—O that it might please thee that all who have been convinced of their sins, may be truly converted to thee. Grant that they may not be so desperately foolish and wicked as to endeavor to resist thy Holy Spirit, by stifling their convictions, but rather incline their hearts not only to think of an holy change from nature to grace, but in an humble dependence on thy blessing, firmly to resolve upon it, and effectually to accomplish it.—O may thy word be so prosperous that it may produce faith in every heart where it is not; and increase it where it is: And may it please thee so to guide and govern all our hearts in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments, that we may be ripening for heaven as we approach the grave, and may find at last, to our unspeakable comfort, that to die is gain.—O do thou enable us truly to repent of our past unprofitableness, and give us grace in future, duly to improve
all

all the talents which thou hast intrusted to our care,—Help us more and more to put off the Old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and to put on the New Man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.—And since thou art pleased of thy gracious goodness to grant us a free use of the means of grace, grant us daily an increase of thy grace, that the end of these means may be duly answered, by our attaining a nearer conformity to thy divine image and likeness.—And do thou, O God of love, fill our hearts with love unfeigned to thee, and to Jesus, whom thou hast sent, and to all men for thy sake.—O graft in our hearts the love of thy name: increase in us true religion, nourish us with all godliness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same.—Defend us all, O Lord, with thy heavenly grace, grant that we may continue thine for ever; and ever more and more increase in the grace of thy Holy Spirit, until we come to thine everlasting kingdom.

Our Father, &c.

all the things which thou hast imparted to
our care. We are more and more to put off
the Old Man, which is conformed according to
the deceitful lusts, and to put on the New Man,
which after God is created in righteousness and
true holiness. — And since thou art pleased to
thy gracious goodness to grant us a free use
of the means of grace, grant us ability to re-
sist of thy grace, that the end of these
means may be duly answered, by working in
us a new conformity to thy divine image
and likeness. — And O Lord, O God of love,
fill our hearts with love to thyself, to each
other, and to all, which is the first fruit, and to
all men for thy sake. — Grant in our hearts
the love of thy name, which is the second
fruit, and in our wills, which is the third
fruit, grace to keep us in the same. —
O Lord, O God, with thy heavenly
grace, grant that we may continue in the
same, and ever more thy right hand in the
grace of thy Holy Spirit, which we receive
in the washing of water with the word.

Our Father, &c.

H Y M N S.

H Y M N I.

The Christian's Hope and Refuge.

By the Author of the Exhortation.

I.

BLESSED EMMANUEL, King of kings,
Whose presence joy and comfort brings,
Come, fix thy dwelling in my soul,
And cleanse, and captivate the whole.

II.

Come, Holy Jesus, Prince of Peace,
Bid all my doubts and sorrows cease;
All other stay beside I hate,
For, thou alone canst fix my state.

III.

When sunk beneath a load of guilt,
To ease my pain thy blood was spilt;
This, this alone can heal my heart,
And of all sins remove the smart.

IV.

What tho' they're of a crimson dye,
And from the law I helpless lie;
Still thy almighty pow'r can save,
From sin, destruction, and the grave.

V.

Not all the hosts of hell we see,
Can hurt a faint who trusts in thee;
Thy righteousness is all divine,
O! grant that I may call it mine.

HYMN

Then

VI.

Then shall I be *complete indeed,*
And comfort find in ev'ry need ;
Then shall I triumph o'er all pain,
And find at last *to die is gain.*

Hymns before Service,

H Y M N II.

Psaln C.

I.

BEFORE *Jehovah's* awful throne,
Ye nations bow with sacred joy,
Know that the LORD is God alone,
He can create, and he destroy,

II.

His sov'reign pow'r, without our aid,
Made us of clay, and form'd us men ;
And when like wand'ring sheep we stray'd,
He brought us to his fold again.

III.

We'll crowd thy gates with thankful songs,
High as the heav'ns our voices raise ;
And earth with her ten thousand tongues
Shall fill thy courts with sounding praise,

IV.

Wide as the world is thy command,
Vast as eternity thy love ;
Firm as a rock thy truth must stand,
When rolling years shall cease to move.

HYMN

H Y M N III.

CHRIST the Sun of Righteousness.

Malachi iv. 2.

I.

TO thee, O God, we homage pay,
Source of the light that rules the day;
Who while he gilds all nature's frame,
Reflects thy rays, and speaks thy name.

II.

In louder strains we sing that grace,
Which gives the *Sun of Righteousness*;
Whose nobler light salvation brings,
And scatters healing from his wings.

III.

Still on our hearts may Jesus shine
With beams of light and love divine!
Quickened by him our souls shall live,
And cheer'd by him shall grow and thrive.

IV.

O may his glories stand confess'd
From north to south, from east to west;
Successful may his gospel run
Wide as the circuit of the sun!

V.

When shall that radiant scene arise,
When, fix'd on high in purer skies,
CHRIST all his lustre shall display
On all his saints thro' endless day!

HYMN

H Y M N IV.

Rev. iv. 11, and v. 11, 12.

I.

COME, let us join our chearful songs,
With angels round the throne;
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

II.

Worthy the LAMB that dy'd, they cry,
To be exalted thus:

Worthy the LAMB our hearts reply,
For he was slain for us!

III.

JESUS is worthy to receive
Honor and pow'r divine;
And blessings more than we can give,
Be, LORD, for ever thine.

IV.

The whole creation join in one,
To bless the sacred name
Of him who sits upon the throne,
And to adore the LAMB.

Hymns before Sermon.

H Y M N V.

Isaiah lv. 1.

I.

HO! ev'ry one that thirsts, draw nigh,
('Tis God invites the fallen race)
Mercy and free salvation buy,
Buy wine, and milk, and gospel-grace.
Come

II.

Come to the living waters, come,
Sinners, obey your Maker's call;
Return, ye weary wand'ers, home,
And find my grace reach'd out to all.

III.

See, from the rock a fountain rise!
For you in healing streams it rolls;
Money ye need not bring, nor price,
Ye lab'ring, burden'd, sin-sick souls.

IV.

Nothing ye in exchange shall give;
Leave all you have, and are, behind;
Frankly the gift of God receive,
Pardon, and peace, in Jesus find.

H Y M N VI.

Thanks for the Gospel.

I.

O JESU, our LORD,
Thy name be ador'd,
For all the rich blessings convey'd thro' thy word.

II.

In spirit we trace
Thy wonders of grace;
And cheerfully join in a concert of praise.

III.

The Antient of Days
His glory displays,
And shines on his chosen with cherishing rays.

IV.

The trumpet of God
Is sounding abroad
The language of mercy, salvation thro' blood.

R r

Thrice

V.

Thrice happy are they
Who hear and obey;
And share in the blessings of this gospel-day.

VI.

The people who know,
The SAVIOUR, below,
With burning affection to worship him glow.

VII.

Their anguish and smart
And sorrows depart,
Who find his salvation inscrib'd on their heart.

VIII.

This blessing be mine
Thro' favor divine:
But O my Redeemer, the glory be thine!

IX.

The work is of grace;
Thine, thine be the praise!
And mine to adore thee and tell of thy ways.

H Y M N VII.

Psalm xciii.

YE servants of God, your *Master* proclaim,
And publish abroad his wonderful name:
The name all-victorious of Jesus extoll;
His Kingdom is glorious, and rules over all.

II.

Salvation to God, who sits on the throne,
Let all cry aloud, and honor the Son:
Our Jesus's praises the angels proclaim,
Fall down on their faces, and worship the *Lamb*.

III.

Then let adore, and give him his right,
All glory and pow'r, and wisdom and might;
All honor and blessing, with angels above,
And thanks never-ceasing, and infinite love.

H Y M N VIII.

I.

AWAKE, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth and early rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

II.

Redeem thy mis-spent time that's past,
Live this day as if 'twere thy last;
T' improve thy talents take great care,
'Gainst the great day thyself prepare.

III.

Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience as the noon-day clear,
Think how th' all-seeing God thy ways,
And all thy secret thoughts surveys.

IV.

Direct, controul, suggest this day,
All I design, or do, or say;
That all my pow'rs, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.

V.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow:
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

Hymns for the Lord's-Day Morning.

H Y M N IX.

I.

THIS is the day the Lord hath made:
He calls the hours his own:
Let heav'n rejoice, let earth be glad,
And praise surround the throne.

R r 2

To

H.

To-day CHRIST rose, and left the dead,
And Satan's Empire fell:
To-day the faints his triumphs spread,
And all his wonders tell.

III.

Hofannah to the anointed King,
To *David's* holy Son!
Help us, O LORD, descend, and bring
Salvation from thy throne.

IV.

Hofannah, in the highest strains
The church on earth can rise;
The highest heav'ns in which he reigns
Shall give him nobler praise.

H Y M N X.

I.

THE LORD of Sabbath let us praise,
In concert with the blest,
Who joyful in harmonious lays,
Employ an endless rest.

II.

Thus, LORD, while we remember thee,
We blest and happy grow:
By hymns of praise we learn to be,
Triumphant here below.

III.

On this glad day a brighter scene
Of glory was display'd
By God, th' eternal Word, than when
This universe was made.

IV.

He rises, who mankind hath bought
With grief and pain extreme;
'Twas great to speak the world from nought,
'Twas greater to redeem!

Hymns for the Evening.

H Y M N XI.

GLORY to thee, my God, this night,
For all the blessings of the light;
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,
Under thine own almighty wings.

II.

Forgive me, LORD, for thy dear SON,
Whatever ills this day I've done;
That with the world, myself, and thee,
I, e're I sleep, at peace may be.

III.

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
Triumphant rise at the last day.

IV.

O may my soul on thee repose,
And with sweet sleep my eyelids close;
Sleep, that may me more active make,
To serve my God when I awake.

V.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

H Y M N XII.

MY God, my only help and hope,
My strong and sure defence,
For all the mercies of this day
I bless thy Providence.

II.

As in the day thou art about
The path wherein I tread;
So now, when I lie down to rest,
Be thou about my bed

III.

GOD was my sun and shield all day,
My keeper and my guide;
His care was on my frailty shewn,
His mercies multiply'd.

IV.

Minutes and mercies multiply'd
Have made up all this day;
Minutes came quick, but Mercies were
More swift and free than they.

Hymns for Christmas.

H Y M N XIII.

I.

HARK! the herald-angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconcil'd.

II.

Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumphs of the Skies;
With th' angelic host proclaim,
"CHRIST is born in Bethlehem!"

III.

CHRIST by highest heav'n ador'd,
CHRIST the everlasting LORD!
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of the virgin's womb.

Veil'd

IV.

Veil'd in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail th' incarnate Deity!
Pleas'd as man with men t' appear,
JESUS our IMMANUEL here.

V.

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings.

VI.

Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that men no more may die:
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

HYMN XIV.

I.

COME, thou long-expected JESUS,
Born to set thy people free:
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee;
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

II.

Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child, and yet a King;
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring;
By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

HYMN

Hymn for New-Year's Day.

HYMN XV.

AND now, my soul, another year
Of thy short life is past;

I cannot long continue here,

And this may be my last.

II.

Much of my dubious life is gone,

Nor will return again;

And swift my passing moments run,

The few that yet remain.

III.

Awake, my soul, with utmost care,

Thy true condition learn;

What are thy hopes, how sure, how fair,

And what thy great concern,

IV.

Now a new scene of time begins,

Set out afresh for heaven;

Seek pardon for thy former sins,

In CHRIST so freely given.

V.

Devoutly yeld thyself to God,

And on his grace depend;

With zeal pursue the heav'nly road,

Nor doubt a happy end.

Hymns for Good-Friday.

HYMN XVI.

Gal. vi. 14.

WHEN I survey the wondrous cross,

On which the Prince of Glory dy'd,

My richest gain I count but loss,

And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid

II.

Forbid it, LORD, that I should boast,
 Save in the cross of CHRIST, my GOD:
 All the vain things that charm me most,
 I'd sacrifice them for thy blood.

III.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
 Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
 Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
 Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

IV.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
 That were a present far too small;
 Love so amazing, so divine,
 Demands my soul; my life, my all.

H Y M N XVII.

Lamentations i. 22.

I.

ALL ye that pass by, to Jesus draw nigh,
 To you is it nothing that Jesus should die?
 Your ransom and peace, your surety he is;
 Come, see, if there ever was sorrow like his.

II.

For what you have done, his blood did atone,
 The FATHER hath punish'd for you, his dear SON;
 The LORD, in the day of his anger, did lay
 Our sins on the Lamb, and he bore them away.

III.

He answer'd for all—O come at his call,
 And low at his cross, with astonishment fall,
 His death is thy plea, thy Advocate see,
 And hear the blood speak that hath answer'd for thee:

Hymns for Easter-Day.

H Y M N XVIII.

I.

CHRIST the LORD is risen to-day, *Hal.*
Sons of men and angels say, *Hal.*
Raife your joys and triumphs high, *Hal.*
Sing ye heav'ns, and earth reply, *Hal.*

II.

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won;
Lo, our Sun's Eclipse is o'er,
Lo, he sets in blood no more.

III.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal,
CHRIST hath burst the gates of hell:
Death in vain forbids his rise,
CHRIST hath open'd Paradise.

IV.

Lives again our glorious King,
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Once he died our souls to save,
Where thy victory, O grave?

V.

Soar we now, where CHRIST has led,
Foll'wing our exalted Head,
Made like him, like him we rise,
Our's the cross, the grave, the skies.

IV.

Hail the LORD of earth and heav'n,
Praise to thee by both be giv'n:
Thee we greet triumphant now,
Hail, the Resurrection—thou.

HYMN

H Y M N XIX.

THE Sun of Righteousness appears,
To set in blood no more;
Adore the scatt'rer of your fears,
Your rising Sun adore.

II.
The faints, when he resign'd his breath,
Unclos'd their sleeping eyes;
He breaks again the bands of death,
Again the dead arise.

III.
Alone the dreadful race he ran,
Alone the wine-press trod;
He dy'd and suffer'd as a man,
He rises as a God.

IV.
In vain the stone, the watch, the seal,
Forbid an early rise,
To him who breaks the gates of hell,
And opens Paradise.

Hymns for Whit-Sunday.

H Y M N XX.

Veni Creator.

COME HOLY SPIRIT heav'nly Dove,
With all thy quick'ning pow'rs,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

II.
Look how we grovel here below,
Fond of these earthly toys;
Our souls how heavily they go
To reach eternal joys.

III.

In vain we tune our formal songs;
 In vain we strive to rise;
 Hosannas languish on our tongues,
 And our devotion dies.

IV.

Dear LORD, and shall we ever live
 At this poor dying rate;
 Our love so faint, so cold to thee,
 And thine to us so great?

V.

Come HOLY SPIRIT, heav'nly Dove,
 With all thy quick'ning pow'rs;
 Come shed abroad a SAVIOUR'S love,
 And that shall kindle ours.

H Y M N XXI.

Extracted from the Ordination-Office.

I.

COME HOLY GHOST, our souls inspire,
 And lighten with celestial fire,
 Thou the anointing Spirit art,
 Who dost thy sev'nfold gifts impart.

II.

Thy blessed unction from above,
 Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
 Enable with perpetual light
 The dulness of our blinded sight.

III.

Anoint and cheer our soiled face,
 With the abundance of thy grace.
 Keep far our foes, give peace at home,
 Where thou art guide, no ill can come.

Teach

IV.

Teach us to know the FATHER, SON,
And Thee of both to be but One ;
That through the ages all along,
This, this may be our endless song—

V.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow ;
Praise him, all creatures here below ;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host ;
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

Hymns for Trinity-Sunday,

H Y M N XXII.

I.

HAIL Holy, Holy, Holy LORD ;
Be endless praise to Thee ;
Supreme, essential ONE, ador'd
In co-eternal THREE,

II.

Enthron'd in everlasting state,
E'er Time its round began,
Who join'd in council to create
The dignity of man.

III.

To whom Isaiah's vision shew'd,
The Seraph's veil their wings.
While Thee JEHOVAH, LORD and GOD,
Th' angelic army sings.

IV.

To Thee by mystic pow'rs on high
Were humble praises given,
When John beheld with favor'd eye,
Th' inhabitants of heav'n.

V.

All that the name of creature owns,
To Thee in Hymns aspire;
May we as angels on our thrones,
For ever join the choir.

VI.

Hail, Holy, Holy, Holy LORD;
Be endless praise to Thee;
Supreme, essential ONE, ador'd
In co-eternal THREE.

H Y M N XXIII.

Gloria Patri,

I.

O FATHER of heaven! be ever ador'd!
Thy mercy we find, in sending our LORD,
To ransom and bless us; thy goodness we praise
For sending in JESUS salvation by grace.

II.

O SON of his love! who deign'dst to die,
Our curse to remove, our pardon to buy;
Accept our thanksgiving, Almighty to save,
Who openest heaven to all that believe.

III.

O SPIRIT of love, of health and of pow'r!
Thy working we prove; thy grace we adore,
Whose inward revealing applies our LORD'S blood,
Attesting and sealing us children of God.

Hymns for Funerals.

H Y M N XXIV.

GREAT God, I own thy sentence just,
And nature must decay;
I yield my body to the dust,
To dwell with fellow clay.

Yet

II.

Yet faith may triumph o'er the grave,
 And trample on the tombs ;
 My JESUS, my REDEEMER lives,
 My GOD, my SAVIOUR comes.

III.

The mighty Conqueror shall appear,
 High on a royal seat ;
 And death the last of all his foes,
 Lie vanquish'd at his feet.

IV.

Tho' greedy worms devour my skin,
 And gnaw my wasting flesh ;
 When GOD shall build my bones again,
 He cloaths them all afresh.

V.

Then shall I see thy lovely face,
 With strong immortal eyes,
 And feast upon thy unknown grace
 With pleasure and surprize.

H Y M N XXV.

I.

TIS finish'd, 'tis done, the spirit is fled,
 The pris'ner is gone, the Christian is dead !
 The Christian is living thro' JESUS's love,
 And gladly receiving a kingdom above.

II.

All honor and praise are JESUS's due ;
 Supported by grace he fought his way thro' ;
 Triumphantly glorious thro' JESUS's zeal,
 And more than victorious o'er sin, death and hell.

III.

Then let us record the conquering name,
 Our Captain and Lord with shoutings proclaim ;
 Who trust in his passion and follow our Head,
 To certain salvation we all shall be led.

O JESUS,

IV.

O JESUS, lead on thy militant care,
 And give us a crown of righteousness there;
 Where dazzled with glory the seraphims gaze,
 Or prostrate adore Thee in silence of praise.

V.

Come, LORD, and display thy sign in the sky,
 And bear us away to mansions on high:
 The kingdom be given, the purchase divine,
 And crown us in heaven eternally thine.

Hymns for the Sacrament.

H Y M N XXVI.

I.

SINNERS, obey the gospel-word,
 Haste to the supper of your LORD;
 Be wise to know your gracious day.
 All things are ready, come away!

II.

Ready the FATHER is to own,
 And kiss his late-returning son;
 Ready the loving SAVIOUR stands,
 And spreads for you his bleeding hands.

III.

Ready the SPIRIT of his love
 Just now the stony heart to move;
 T' apply and witness with the blood,
 And wash and seal you sons of God.

IV.

Ready for you the angels wait,
 To triumph in your blest estate:
 Tuning their harps, they long to praise
 The wonders of redeeming grace.

Come

Come, then ye sinners to your LORD;
To happiness in CHRIST restor'd;
His profer'd benefits embrace,
The plenitude of gospel grace.

H Y M N XXVII.

OUR Shepherd alone, the LORD, let us bless;
Who sits on the throne, the *Prince* of our *Peace*;
Who evermore saves us by shedding his blood;
All hail, holy JESUS, our LORD and our GOD!

II.
We daily will sing thy merits and praise,
Thou merciful Spring of pity and grace:
Thy kindness for ever to men we will tell,
And say our dear SAVIOUR redeems from hell.

III.
Preserve us in love while here we abide,
Nor ever remove, nor cover, nor hide
Thy glorious salvation, till joyful we see,
The beautiful vision compleated in thee!

H Y M N XXVIII.

ALL praise to the LORD, all praise is his due,
To-day is his word of promise found true;
We, we are the nations presented to God,
Well-pleasing oblations thro' JESUS's blood.

II.
Poor Gentiles from far to JESUS we came,
And offer'd we are to GOD thro' his name;
To GOD thro' the SPIRIT ourselves may we give,
While sav'd by the merit of JESUS we live!

H Y M N XXIX.

CHRIST exalted. Hebrews xii. 2.

I.

HOW glorious the LAMB is seen on his throne!
 His labors are o'er, his conquests put on:
 A kingdom is given into the LAMB's hand,
 In earth and in heaven, for ever to stand,

II.

Ye sinners below then trust in the LORD,
 Look up to his arm, his honor, his word:
 Athirst for his favor, his Godhead adore,
 Look up to your SAVIOUR, and joy evermore!

Hymns on various Subjects.

H Y M N XXX.

To JESUS CHRIST.

I.

O Thou in whom the Gentiles trust,
 Thou only holy, only just,
 Oh tune our souls to praise thy name;
 JESUS! Unchangeable the same:

II.

If angels, whilst to Thee they sing,
 Wrap up their faces in their wing,
 How shall we sinful dust draw nigh
 The great, the awful Deity!

III.

Glory to Thee, auspicious LAMB;
 Thou holy LORD, Thou great I AM:
 With all our pow'r thy grace we bless,
 Our joy, our peace, our righteousness.

Live;

IV.

Live, ever-glorious Jesus, live,
 Worthy all blessings to receive,
 Worthy on high enthron'd to sit
 With ev'ry pow'r beneath thy feet.

H Y M N XXXI.

Pfalm lxxxix. 14, 15, 16, 17.

I.

O What shall I do, my SAVIOUR to praise,
 So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace;
 So strong to deliver, so good to redeem
 The weakest believer, that hangs upon him!

II.

How happy the man, whose heart is set free,
 The people that can be joyful in thee!
 Their joy is to walk in the light of thy face,
 And still they are talking of Jesus's grace.

III.

Their daily delight shall be in thy name,
 They shall, as their right, thy righteousness claim:
 Thy righteousness wearing, and cleans'd by thy blood,
 Bold shall they appear in the presence of God.

H Y M N XXXII.

CHRIST the Believer's All. Col. iii. 11.

I.

LAMB of God, we fall before thee,
 Humbly trusting in thy cross;
 That alone be all our glory,
 All things else are dung and dross.

II.

Thee we own a perfect SAVIOUR,
 Only source of all that's good:
 Ev'ry grace, and ev'ry favour
 Come to us thro' Jesu's blood.

III.

JESUS gives us true repentance
 By his SPIRIT sent from heav'n;
 JESUS whispers this sweet sentence,
 " Son thy sins are all forgiv'n ;"

IV.

Faith he gives us to believe it ;
 Grateful hearts his love to prize ;
 Want we wisdom ! he must give it ;
 Hearing ears, and seeing eyes ;

V.

JESUS gives us pure affections,
 Wills to do what he requires ;
 Makes us follow his directions,
 And what he commands, inspires.

VI.

All our pray'rs, and all our praises,
 Rightly offer'd in his name ;
 He that dictates them is JESUS ;
 He that answers, is the same.

VII.

When we live on Jesu's merit,
 Then we worship God aright ;
 FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT,
 Then we savingly unite.

VIII.

This the whole conclusion of it,
 Great or good whate'er we call ;
 GOD, or king, or priest, or prophet,
 JESUS CHRIST is ALL IN ALL.

H Y M N XXXIII.

PLUNG'D in a gulph of dark despair,
 We wretched sinners lay,
 Without one chearful beam of hope,
 Or spark of glimm'ring day.

With

II.

With pitying eyes, the Prince of Grace
Beheld our helpless grief;
He saw, : and (O amazing love!)
He came to our relief.

III.

Down from the shining seats above,
With joyful haste he fled,
Enter'd the grave in mortal flesh,
And dwelt among the dead.

IV.

Oh ! for this love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break ;
And all harmonious human tongues,
The SAVIOUR'S praises speak.

V.

Angels assist our mighty joys,
Strike all your harps of gold ;
But when you raise your highest notes,
His love can ne'er be told.

H Y M N XXXIV.

I.

JESU, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
'Midst flaming worlds in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

II.

When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
E'en then, shall this be all my plea,
" Jesus hath liv'd, hath dy'd for me."

III.

Bold shall I stand at that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully thro' Thee absolv'd I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame,

Thus

IV.

Thus *Abraham*, the friend of God,
 Thus all the armies bought with blood,
 SAVIOUR of sinners, Thee proclaim:
 Sinners, of whom the chief I am.

V.

This spotless Robe the same appears,
 When ruin'd nature sinks in years;
 No age can change it's glorious hue,
 The grace of CHRIST is ever new.

VI.

O let the dead now hear thy voice,
 Now bid thy banish'd ones rejoice,
 Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
 Jesus, the Lord our Righteousness.

H Y M N XXXV.

I.

COME thou fount of ev'ry blessing!
 Tune mine heart to sing thy grace;
 Streams of mercy never ceasing,
 Call for songs of loudest praise;
 Teach me some melodious sonnet,
 Sung by flaming tongues above;
 Praise the Mount—I'm fix'd upon it,
 Mount of God's unchanging love!

II.

Here I raise my *Eben-Ezer*,
 Hither by thine help I'm come;
 And I hope by thy good pleasure,
 Safely to arrive at home:
 Jesus fought me, when a stranger,
 Wand'ring from the fold of God,
 He, to rescue me from danger,
 Interpos'd with precious blood.

O to

III.

O to grace, how great a debtor,
 Daily I'm constrain'd to be!
 Let that grace, now like a fetter,
 Bind my wand'ring heart to thee:
 Prone to wander, LORD, I feel it,
 Prone to leave the God I love——
 Here's mine heart——O take, and seal it;
 Seal it from thy courts above.

H Y M N XXXVI.

Pf. xxiii. John x. 11.

I.

THE LORD my pasture shall prepare,
 And feed me with a shepherd's care;
 His presence shall my wants supply,
 And guard me with a watchful eye;
 My noon-day walks he shall attend,
 And all my mid-night hours defend.

II.

When in the fultry glebe I faint,
 Or on the thirsty mountain pant,
 To fertile vales and dewy meads,
 My weary wand'ring steps he leads;
 Where peaceful rivers, soft and flow,
 Amidst the verdant landscape flow.

III.

Though in the paths of death I tread,
 With gloomy horrors overspread,
 My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,
 For thou, O LORD, art with me still;
 Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,
 And guide me through the dreadful shade.

Though

IV.

Though in a bare and rugged way,
Through devious lonely wilds I stray,
Thy beauty shall my pains beguile,
The barren wilderness shall smile,
With sudden greens and herbage crown'd,
And streams shall murmur all around.

H Y M N XXXVII.

The Second Advent. Revelations i. 7.

I.

LO! he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favour'd sinners slain!
Thousand thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumph of his train:
Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Amen.

II.

Every eye shall now behold him,
Rob'd in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at nought and sold him,
Pierc'd, and nail'd him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the true MESSIAH see.

III.

Ev'ry island, sea, and mountain,
Heav'n and earth shall flee away;
All who hate him, must confounded,
Hear the trump proclaim the day:
Come to judgment!
Come to judgment! come away!

Now

IV.

Now redemption long expected,
 See! in solemn pomp appear!
 All his saints, by man rejected,
 Now shall meet him in the air;
 Hallelujah!
 See the day of God appear!

V.

Answer thine own bride and spirit,
 Hasten, LORD, the gen'ral doom!
 The new heav'n and earth t' inherit,
 Take thy pining exiles home:
 All creation
 Travels! groans! and bids thee come.

VI.

Yea! Amen! Let all adore thee,
 High on thine eternal throne!
 SAVIOUR, take the pow'r and glory;
 Claim the kingdom for thy own:
 O come quickly!
 Hallelujah! come, LORD, come!

H Y M N XXXVIII.

On the Excellency of the Bible.

I.

Great God, with wonder and with praise
 On all thy works I look:
 But still thy wisdom, pow'r and grace,
 Shine brightest in thy book.

II.

Here are my choicest treasures hid,
 Here my best comfort lies;
 Here my desires are satisfy'd,
 And hence my hopes arise.

U n

LORD,

III

LORD, make me understand thy law :
 Shew what my thoughts have been :
 And from thy gospel let me draw
 Pardon for all my sin.

IV.

Here would I learn how Christ has dy'd
 To save my soul from hell :
 Not all the books on earth beside,
 Such heavenly wonders tell.

V.

Then let me love my Bible more,
 And take a fresh delight
 By day to read thy wonders o'er,
 And meditate by night.

H U M I L I A T I O N

H Y M N XXXIX.

Psalm li.

I.

L ORD, we are vile, conceiv'd in sin,
 And born unholy and unclean ;
 Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
 Corrupts the race, and taints us all.

II.

Soon as we draw our infant breath,
 The seeds of sin grow up for death ;
 Thy law demands a perfect heart,
 But we're defil'd in ev'ry part.

III.

Behold, we fall before thy face !
 Our only refuge is thy grace :
 No outward forms can make us clean,
 The leprosy lies deep within.

JESUS,

IV.

JESUS, our God, thy Blood alone,
Hath pow'r sufficient to atone;
Lord, let us hear thy pard'ning voice,
And make our down-cast hearts rejoice,

HYMN XL.

SHEW pity, Lord, O Lord forgive:
Let a repenting rebel live:
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

II.

My crimes are great, but don't surpass
The pow'r and glory of thy grace;
Great God thy nature hath no bound,
So let thy pard'ning love be found.

III.

O wash my soul from ev'ry sin,
And make my guilty conscience clean;
Here on my heart the burden lies,
And past offences pain my eyes.

IV.

My lips with shame my sins confess,
Against thy law, against thy grace;
Lord, should thy judgment grow severe,
I am condemn'd, but thou art clear.

V.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope still hov'ring round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sweet support against despair.

H Y M N XL

I.

SING ye praises to the LORD, *Hallelujah,*
 Bless his name with one accord ; *Hal.*
 For 'tis owing to his care, *Hal.*
 What we have, and what we are. *Hal.*

II.

He first made us by his pow'r,
 And preserves us ev'ry hour ;
 Food and raiment, all are his,
 Present Comfort, future bliss.

III.

He directs our steps by day,
 Pointing out the safest way ;
 And at night, in mercy, still
 Guards us from all kinds of ill.

IV.

God forgave us when undone,
 And redeem'd us by his Son ;
 Raise your voices then and sing,
 Thanks to heaven's eternal King.

H Y M N XLII.

I.

HOW can we adore, or worthily praise,
 Thy goodness and pow'r, thou God of all grace,
 With honor and blessing before thee we fall,
 Most gladly confessing thee FATHER of all.

II.

The heav'ns and earth, and water and air,
 To thee owe their birth, subsist by thy care ;
 While angels are singing thy praises above,
 We mortals are bringing our tribute of love.

Thou

III.

Thou, SAVIOUR, art one with God the supreme,
His eternal SON, and equal with him:
Invested with glory, on high dost thou sit,
While angels adore thee, and bow at thy feet.

IV.

How great was thy love, how wond'rous thy grace;
Thou cam'st from above to save a lost race;
And man to deliver, of woman wast born,
That ev'ry believer to God might return.

V.

How soon will thy seat of judgment appear!
Prepare us to meet, and welcome thee there!
Thy witnessing SPIRIT in us shed abroad;
And bid us inherit the kingdom of God.

H Y M N XLIII.

Salvation.

I.

SALVATION! O the joyful sound!
What pleasure to our ears!
A sov'reign balm for ev'ry wound,
A cordial for our fears.

II.

SALVATION! let the echo fly
The spacious earth around—
While all the armies of the sky
Conspire to raise the sound!

H Y M N XLIV.

CHRIST our great Melchisedec.

I.

THOU dear REDEEMER, dying LAMB!
We love to hear of Thee;
No music like thy charming name,
E'en half so sweet can be!

O may

O may we ever hear thy voice,
 In mercy to us speak!
 And in our priest will we rejoice,
 Thou great *Melchisedec*.

II.

Our Jesus shall be still our theme,
 While in this world we stay,
 We'll sing our Jesu's lovely name,
 When all things else decay.
 When we appear in yonder cloud,
 With all his favor'd throng,
 Then will we sing more sweet, more loud,
 And CHRIST shall be our song.

H Y M N XLV.

Praise to the CREATOR and REDEEMER,

FROM all that dwell below the Skies,
 Let the CREATOR'S praise arise;
 Let the REDEEMER'S name be sung,
 Thro' ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue.
 Eternal are thy mercies, LORD,
 Eternal truth attends thy word;
 Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
 'Till suns shall rise and set no more.

H Y M N XLVI.

Salvation by Grace in CHRIST.

I.

NOW to the pow'r of God supreme,
 Be everlasting honours giv'n;
 He saves from hell, (we bless his name)
 He calls lost wand'ring souls to heav'n.
 Not

II.

Not for our duties or deserts,
But of his own abounding grace,
He works salvation in our hearts,
And forms a people for his praise.

III.

'Twas his own purpose that begun
To rescue rebels doom'd to die,
He gave us grace in CHRIST his Son,
Before he spread the starry Sky.

IV.

JESUS, the LORD, appears at last,
And makes his FATHER's counsels known,
Declares the great transaction past,
And brings immortal blessings down.

H Y M N XLVII.

Rev. xi. 15.

I.

HE comes! he comes! the Judge severe!
The seventh trumpet speaks him near;
His lightnings flash, his thunders roll,
He's welcome to the faithful soul.
Welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome,
Welcome to the faithful soul.

II.

From heav'n, angelic voices sound,
See the Almighty JESUS crown'd;
Girt with omnipotence and grace,
And glory decks the SAVIOUR's face!
Glory, glory, glory, glory, glory decks the
SAVIOUR's face!

Descending

III.

Descending on his azure throne,
 He claims the kingdoms for his own;
 The kingdoms all obey his word,
 And hail him their triumphant Lord:
 Hail him, hail him, hail him, hail him, hail
 him, their triumphant Lord.

IV.

Shout all the people of the Sky,
 And all the saints of the Most High:
 Our God, who now his right obtains,
 For ever and for ever reigns.
 Ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, and for ever
 reigns!

V.

The FATHER praise, the SON adore,
 The SPIRIT bless for evermore;
 Salvation's glorious work is done,
 We welcome thee GREAT THREE IN ONE.
 Welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome, wel-
 come thee GREAT THREE IN ONE.

H Y M N XLVIII.

The Blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all Sin.

I.

O Come thou wounded LAMB of GOD!
 Come wash us in thy cleansing blood
 Give us to know thy love, then pain
 Is sweet, and life or death is gain.

II.

Take our poor hearts, and let them be
 For ever clos'd to all but thee:
 Seal thou our breasts, and let us wear
 That pledge of love for ever there.

How

III.

How can it be thou heav'nly King,
That thou should'st man to glory bring!
Make slaves the partners of thy throne,
Deck'd with a never-fading crown!

IV.

Ah, LORD! enlarge our scanty thought,
To know the wonders thou hast wrought,
Unloose our stamm'ring tongues to tell
Thy love immense, unsearchable.

V.

First-born of many brethren thou,
To thee both earth and heav'n must bow;
Help us to thee our all to give,
Thine may we die, thine may we live!

H Y M N XLIX.

Psal'm xc. i.

I.

AWAKE, and sing the song
Of Moses and the LAMB,
Wake ev'ry heart and ev'ry tongue
To praise the SAVIOUR'S NAME.

II.

Sing of his dying love,
Sing of his rising power,
Sing how he intercedes above
For those whose sins he bore.

III.

Sing 'till we feel our hearts
Ascending with our tongues,
Sing 'till the love of sin departs,
And grace inspires our songs.

X x

Sing

A

III.

Sing on your heavenly way,
 Ye ransom'd sinners sing,
 Sing on, rejoicing ev'ry day
 In Christ th' eternal King.

IV.

Soon shall ye hear him say,
 "Ye blessed children come;"
 Soon will he call you hence away,
 And take his wand'ers home.

V.

HYMN L.

Ebenezer. Samuel vi. 12.

I.

MY helper God! I bless his name:
 The same his pow'r, his grace the same,
 The tokens of his friendly care
 Open, and crown, and close the year.

II.

I 'midst ten thousand dangers stand,
 Supported by his guardian hand;
 And see, when I review my ways,
 Ten thousand monuments of praise.

III.

Thus far his arm hath led me on;
 Thus far I make his mercy known;
 And, while I tread this desert land,
 New mercies shall new songs demand.

IV.

My grateful soul, on Jordan's shore,
 Shall raise one sacred pillar more:
 Then bear, in his bright courts above,
 Inscriptions of immortal love.

HYMN LII

Relief for despairing Sinners. Zech. xiii. 1.

HOW sad our state by nature is,
Our sin how deep it stains;
And Satan binds our captive souls
Fast in his slavish chains.

II.

But there's a voice of sov'reign grace
Sounds from God's sacred word;
Ho! ye despairing sinners come
And trust upon the LORD.

III.

O may we hear th' Almighty call,
And run to this relief!
We would believe thy promise LORD,
O help our unbelief!

IV.

To the blest fountain of thy blood,
Teach us, O LORD, to fly:
There may we wash our spotted souls,
From crimes of deepest dye!

V.

Stretch out thine arm, victorious King,
Our reigning sins subdue;
Drive the old Dragon from his seat,
With his infernal crew.

VI.

Poor, guilty, weak, and helpless worms,
Into thine hands we fall;
Be thou our strength and righteousness,
Our Jesus, and our all!

HYMN LII.

An Evening Song.

NO farther go to-night, but stay
 Dear SAVIOUR till the break of day:
 Turn in, dear LORD, with me;
 And in the morning when I wake,
 Me in thine arms, my JESUS take;
 And I'll go on with thee.

HYMN LIII.

The Pilgrim's Hymn. A Dialogue.

TELL us, O women, we wou'd know
 Whither so fast ye move?
 We, call'd to leave the world below,
 Are seeking one above.

II.

Whence came ye, say, and what the place
 That ye are trav'ling from!
 From Tribulation, we, thro' grace,
 Are now returning home.

III.

Is not your native country here?
 Like you not this abode!
 We seek a better country far,
 A city built by GOD.

IV.

Thither we travel, nor intend
 Short of that bliss to rest:
 Nor we, 'till in the sinner's friend
 Our weary souls are blest'd.

V.

Friends of the Bridegroom we shall reign,
 SAVIOUR, we ask no more;
 Hail LAMB of GOD, for sinners slain,
 Whom heaven and earth adore!

HYMN

HYMN LIV

The innumerable Mercies of God thankfully acknowledged. Psa. cxxxix. 17, 18.

I. **I**N glad amazement, LORD, I stand
Amidst the bounties of thy hand;
How numberless those bounties are!
How rich, how various, and how fair!

II.
But O! what poor returns I make!
What lifeless thanks I pay thee back!
LORD, I confess with humble shame,
My offerings scarce deserve the name,

III.
Fain would my lab'ring heart devise
To bring some nobler sacrifice:
It sinks beneath the mighty load:
What shall I render to my God?

IV.
To him I'd consecrate my praise,
And vow the remnant of my days;
Yet what at best can I pretend
Worthy such gifts from such a friend?

V.
In deep abasement, LORD, I see
My emptiness and poverty:
Enrich my soul with grace divine,
And make it wholly, ever, thine.

VI.
Give me at length an angel's tongue,
That heav'n may echo with my song;
The theme, too great for time, shall be
The joy of long eternity.

HYMN

HYMN LIV

The Possibility of Dying this Year. Jer. xxviii. 26.

GOD of my life, thy constant care
 With blessings crown each opening year;
 This guilty life dost thou prolong,
 And wake anew mine annual song.

II.
 How many precious souls are fled
 To the vast regions of the dead;
 Since from this day the changing sun
 Thro' his last yearly period run!

III.
 We yet survive; but who can say,
 Or thro' the year, or month, or day,
 "I will retain this vital breath;
 "Thus far at least in league with death!"

IV.
 That breath is thine, eternal God,
 'Tis thine to fix my soul's abode:
 It holds its life from thee alone,
 On earth, or in the world unknown.

V.
 To thee our spirits we resign,
 Make them and own them still as thine;
 So shall they smile, secure from fear,
 Tho' death should blast the rising year.

VI.
 Thy children, eager to be gone,
 Bid time's impetuous tide roll on,
 And land them on that blooming shore,
 Where years and death are known no more.

* *Isaiah xxviii. 15.*

HYMN

HYMN LVII

The Blood of CHRIST cleansing from all Sin.

1 John, i. 7.

I.
MY sins, alas! how foul the stains!
How deep, and O! how wide!
O'er my polluted soul they spread,
In double crimson dy'd.

II.
How shall I stand before that God,
In whole all-piercing sight
Some shades of darkness seem to veil
The purest sons of light?

III.
Where shall I wash these spots away,
And make my nature clean,
Since drops of penitential grief
Are tinctur'd still with sin?

IV.
Behold a torrent all-divine
Flows from the Saviour's side,
And strangely bears a crystal stream
Amidst the purple tide.

V.
Here will I bathe my spotted soul,
And make it pure and fair;
Till not the eye of God discern
One foul pollution there.

VI.
Then dress in robes of snowy white,
I'll join the shining band;
And learn new anthems to the Lamb,
While round his throne we stand.

HYMN

HYMN LVII

Complaining of a hard Heart.

I.

OH! for a glance of heav'nly day
 To take this stubborn stone away!
 And thaw with beams of love divine
 This heart, this frozen heart of mine!

II.

The rocks can rend; the earth can quake;
 The seas can roar; the mountains shake;
 Of feeling all things shew some sign,
 But this unfeeling heart of mine.

III.

To hear the sorrows thou hast felt,
 Dear LORD, an adamant would melt;
 But I can read each moving line,
 And nothing moves this heart of mine.

IV.

Thy judgments too unmov'd I hear,
 (Amazing thought!) which devils fear,
 Goodness and wrath in vain combine
 To stir this stupid heart of mine.

V.

But something yet can do the deed,
 And that dear something much I need;
 Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
 And move and melt this heart of mine.

VI.

Come, then dear Jesus in this hour,
 And let thy Spirit by his pow'r,
 Perfect the work, for it is thine,
 And break and melt this heart of mine.

H Y M N LVIII.

God glorious, and Sinners saved.

I.

FATHER, how wide thy glory shines!
How high thy wonders rise!
Known thro' the earth by thousand signs;
By thousand thro' the skies.

II.

Those mighty orbs proclaim thy power,
Their motions speak thy skill:
And on the wings of ev'ry hour
We read thy patience still.

III.

But when we view thy great design
To save rebellious worms;
Where vengeance and compassion join
In their divinest forms:

IV.

Here the whole DEITY is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace.

V.

Now the full glories of the LAMB
Adorn the heav'nly plains,
Bright seraphs learn IMMANUEL'S name,
And try their choicest strains.

VI.

O, may I bear some humble part
In that immortal song,
Wonder and joy shall tune my heart,
And love command my tongue!

HYMN LIX.

The great Journey. Job xvi. 22.

I.
BEHOLD the path that mortals tread
 Down to the regions of the dead!
 Nor will the fleeting moments stay,
 Nor can we measure back our way.

II.
 Our kindred and our friends are gone;
 Know, O my soul, this doom thy own;
 Feeble as theirs my mortal frame,
 The same my way, my house the same.

III.
 From vital air, from chearful light,
 To the cold grave's perpetual night,
 From scenes of duty, means of grace,
 Must I to God's tribunal pass?

IV.
 Important journey! awful view!
 How great the change! the scenes how new!
 The golden gates of heav'n display'd,
 Or hell's fierce flames, and gloomy shade!

V.
 Awake, my soul; thy way prepare,
 And lose in this each mortal care;
 With steady feet that path be trod,
 Which thro' the grave conducts to God.

VI.
 Jesus, to thee my all I trust,
 And, if thou call me down to dust,
 I know thy voice, I bless thy hand,
 And die in smiles at thy command.

What

What was my terror, is my joy;
These views my brightest hopes employ,
To go, e'er many years are o'er,
Secure I shall return no more.

H Y M N LX.

For a Fast-Day in Time of War.

I.

GREAT God of heav'n, and nature, rise,
And hear our loud united cries;
See Britain bow before thy face
Through all her coasts, and seek thy grace.

II.

No arm of flesh we make our trust,
Nor sword, nor horse, nor ships we boast;
Thine is the land, and thine the main,
And human force and skill are vain.

III.

Our guilt might draw thy vengeance down
On every shore, on every town;
But view us, LORD, with pitying eye,
And lay th' uplifted thunder by.

IV.

Forgive the follies of our times,
And purge the land from all its crimes;
Reform'd, and deck'd with grace divine,
Let prince, and priests, and people shine.

V.

So shall our God delight to bless,
And crown our arms with wide success;
Our foes shall dread JEHOVAH's sword,
And conqu'ring Britons shout the LORD.

H Y M N L X I.
E V E N I N G.

I.

ERE I sleep, for ev'ry favor
This day shew'd
By my God,
I will blefs my SAVIOUR.

II.

O my LORD, what shall I render
To thy name,
Still the same
Gracious, good and tender.

III.

Leave me not, but ever love me;
Let thy peace
Be my blifs,
'Till thou hence remove me.

IV.

Visit me with thy falvation:
Let thy care
Now be near,
Round my habitation.

V.

Thou my rock, my guard, my tow'r,
Safely keep
While I sleep,
Me with all thy pow'r.

VI.

So whene'er in death I slumber,
Let me rise
With the wife,
Counted in their number!

HYMN

H Y M N LXII

The Gospel Jubilee. Psalm lxxxix. 15.

I.

L OUD let the tuneful trumpet sound,
And spread the joyful tidings round,
Let ev'ry soul with transport hear,
And hail the LORD's accepted year.

II.

Ye debtors, whom he gives to know,
That you ten thousand talents owe,
When humbled at his feet ye fall,
Your gracious LORD forgives them all.

III.

Slaves, that have borne the heavy chain
Of sin, and hell's tyrannic reign,
To liberty assert your claim,
And urge the great REDEEMER's name.

IV.

The rich estate by *Adam* lost,
Restor'd by CHRIST, you now may boast;
Fair *Salem* your arrival waits,
To golden streets, and pearly gates.

V.

Her blest inhabitants no more
Bondage and poverty deplore:
No debt, but love immensely great,
Whose joy still rises with the debt.

VI.

O happy souls that know the sound!
God's light shall all their steps surround;
And shew that *Jubilee* begun,
Which thro' eternal years shall run.

HYMN

H Y M N LXIII.

Life and Eternity.

I.

THEE we adore, eternal name;
And humbly own to thee,
How feeble is our mortal frame,
What dying worms we be!

II.

Our wasting lives grow shorter still,
As months and days increase!
And ev'ry beating pulse we tell
Leaves but the number less.

III.

The year rolls round, and steals away
The breath that first it gave;
Whate'er we do, where'er we be,
We're trav'ling to the grave!

IV.

Dangers stand thick thro' all the ground,
To push us to the tomb,
And fierce diseases wait around,
To hurry mortals home!

V.

Great God! on what a slender thread
Hang everlasting things!
Th' eternal states of all the dead
Upon life's feeble strings.

VI.

Infinite joy, and endless woe,
Attend on ev'ry breath;
And yet how unconcern'd we go
Upon the brink of death!

Waken,

Waken, O Lord, our drowsy sense,
 To walk this dang'rous road;
 And if our souls are hurried hence,
 May they be found with God!

H Y M N LXIV

Thy Word is Truth. John xviii. 17.

MY hiding place, my refuge, tow'r,
 And shield, art thou, O LORD;
 I firmly anchor all my hopes
 On thine unerring word.

II.

Engrav'd, as in eternal brass,
 The mighty promise shines,
 Nor can the pow'rs of darkness raze,
 Those everlasting lines.

III.

The sacred word of grace is strong
 As that which built the skies.
 The voice which rolls the stars along,
 Spake all the promises.

IV.

My hiding place, my refuge, tow'r,
 And shield art thou, O LORD;
 I firmly anchor all my hopes
 On thine unerring word.

H Y M N LXV.

I.

IN this world of sin and sorrow,
 Compass'd round with many a care,
 From eternity we borrow
 Hope, that can exclude despair:

Thee,

Thee, triumphant God and SAVIOUR,

In the glass of faith we see ;

O assist each faint endeavor !

Raise our earth-born souls to thee.

II.

Place that awful scene before us

Of the last tremendous day,

When to life thou shalt restore us,—

Ling'ring ages, haste away !

Then this vile and sinful nature

Incorruption shall put on :

Life-renewing, glorious SAVIOUR !

Let thy gracious will be done.

H Y M N LXVI.

The Believer's earnest Expectation and Hope.

Phil. i. 20.

I.

HE is a God of sov'reign love,

Who promis'd heav'n to me,

And taught my mind to soar above

Where happy spirits be.

II.

Prepare me, LORD, for thy right hand,

Then come the joyful day !

Come death, and some celestial band,

To bear my soul away,

III.

Then, my beloved, take my soul

Up to thy blest abode,

That, face to face, I may behold,

My SAVIOUR and my God.

HYMN

HYMN LXVIII

I.

YE that in his courts are found,
 List'ning to the joyful sound;
 Lost and helpless as ye are,
 Sons of sorrow, sin, and care:
 Glorify the KING of KINGS,
 Take the peace the gospel brings.

II.

Turn to CHRIST your longing eyes,
 View his bloody sacrifice;
 See in him your sins forgiv'n,
 Pardon, holiness, and heav'n!
 Glorify the KING of KINGS,
 Take the peace the gospel brings.

HYMN LXVIII.

The Ruler's Daughter raised. Mark v. 39—42.

I.

COULD the creatures help or ease us,
 Seldom should we think of pray'r;
 Few, if any, come to JESUS,
 'Till reduc'd to self-despair:
 Long we either flight or doubt him,
 But when all the means we try,
 Prove we cannot do without him,
 Then at last to him we cry.

II.

Fear not then, distress'd believer,
 Venture on his mighty name;
 He is able to deliver,
 And his love is still the same;
 Can his pity or his pow'r,
 Suffer thee to pray in vain?
 Wait but his appointed hour,
 And thy suit thou shalt obtain.

Z z

HYMN

HYMN LXIX.

I will trust and not be afraid.

WHY should I complain of want or distress,
Temptation or pain? He told me no less:
The heirs of salvation, I know from his word,
Through much tribulation must follow their Lord.

II.

How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,
Which he drank quite up, that sinners might live!
His way was much rougher, and darker than mine;
Did Jesus thus suffer, and shall I repine?

III.

Since all that I meet, shall work for my good,
The bitter is sweet, the med'cine is food;
Tho' painful at present, will cease before long,
And then, Oh! how pleasant the conqueror's song!

HYMN LXX.

The real and fancied Heaven.

I.

FAR above yon glorious ceiling
Of the azure vaulted sky,
Jesus sits, his grace revealing,
To the splendid troops on high.

II.

Hosts seraphic humbly bowing
At his foot-stool prostrate fall,
Saints and angels, all avowing
God in Christ, their All in All.

III.

Could we leave our foolish dreaming
Of a fancied heav'n below;
And see Jesu's glory beaming;
How our souls would long to go!

HYMN

HYMN LXXI.

*Having loved his own, which were in the World,
he loved them unto the end. John xiii. 1.*

I.

THIS God is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his pow'r,
And neither knows measure nor end.

II.

'Tis Jesus the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.

HYMN LXXII.

Morning or Evening.

VIXXI I. M M Y H

O God, how endless is thy love!
Thy gifts are ev'ry ev'ning new;
And morning mercies from above,
Gently distil like early dew.

II.

Thou spread'st the curtain of the night,
Great Guardian of our sleeping hours;
Thy sov'reign word restores the light,
And quickens all our drowsy pow'rs.

III.

We yield our pow'rs to thy command,
To thee we consecrate our days!
Perpetual blessings from thine hand
Demand perpetual songs of praise!

H Y M N LXXIII.

Ephes. ii. 13.

I.
OF him who did salvation bring,
LORD, may we ever think and sing!
Arise, ye guilty, he'll forgive;
Arise, ye needy, he'll relieve.

II.
Eternal LORD, Almighty King,
All heav'n doth with thy triumphs ring!
Thou conqu'rest all beneath, above,
Devils with force, and men with love!

III.
To purge our sins, CHRIST shed his blood,
He died to bring us near to God:
Let all the world fall down and know,
That none but God such love could show.

H Y M N LXXIV.

The Pilgrim's Guide thro' the Wilderness.

I.
GUIDE me, O thou great JEHOVAH,
Pilgrim thro' this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy pow'ful hand.
Bread of Heaven, bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

II.
Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow,
Let the fiery-cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through;
Strong Deliv'rer, strong Deliv'rer,
Be thou still my sun and shield.

When

III.
 When I tread the verge of *Jordan*,
 Bid my anxious fear subside ;
 Bear me thro' it's swelling current,
 Land me safe on *Canaan's* side ;
 Songs of praises, songs of praises,
 I will ever give to thee.

H Y M N LXXV.

CHRIST our *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification,*
and Redemption. 1 Cor. i. 30.

I.
BURY'D in shadows of the night,
 We lie, 'till CHRIST restores the light ;
 Wisdom descends to heal the blind
 And chase the darkness of the mind.

II.
 Lost guilty souls are drown'd in tears,
 'Till the atoning blood appears ;
 Then they awake from deep distress,
 And sing the LORD our *Righteousness*.

III.
 Jesus beholds where Satan reigns,
 Binding his slaves in heavy chains :
 He sets the pris'ner free, and breaks
 The iron bondage from our necks.

IV.
 Poor helpless worms in thee possess
 Grace, wisdom, power, and righteousness ;
 Thou art our mighty ALL ; may we
 Give our whole selves, O LORD, to thee !

H Y M N

H Y M N LXXVI.

The Soul's Farewell to the World.

I.

MOUNT my soul to things above,
 Speed thy flight from earthly love;
 Streams of bitterness and woe,
 Thro' this thorny desert flow:
 Here thy portion's to complain,
 Weep o'er sin, and weep again,
 Here thy faith like silver try'd,
 Must the fire test abide.

II.

Yet exult in CHRIST; my soul,
 He can all thy griefs controul,
 He a sov'reign balm will find,
 Healing to the wounded mind;
 Only trust the Prince of Peace,
 Soon shall all thy sorrows cease,
 Look to heav'n thy native home,
 Wait till JESUS quickly come.

H Y M N LXXVII.

The Church's Beauty in the Eyes of Christ.

Sol. Song, iv. i, 7.

I.

KIND is the speech of CHRIST our LORD,
 Affection sounds in ev'ry word;
 "Lo, thou art fair, my love, he cries;
 "Bound to my heart by thousand ties."

II.

"Thou art all fair, my bride, to me, says
 "I will behold no spot in thee."
 What mighty wonders love performs,
 That puts a comeliness on worms!

Defil'd

III.

Defil'd and leathsome as we are,
 He makes us white, and calls us fair ;
 Adorns us with that heav'nly dress,
 His own unspotted righteousness.

H Y M N LXXVIII.

The Life of a saved Sinner.

I.

CONTENT and glad I'll ever be,
 To have salvation, LORD, from thee,
 Ev'n as a sinner poor :
 I nothing have, I nothing am,
 My treasure's in the bleeding LAMB,
 Both now and evermore.

II.

The more thro' grace myself I know,
 The more content I am to bow,
 And sink beneath thy cross ;
 And live by faith upon thy blood,
 Waiting on thee for ev'ry good,
 And count my gain but loss.

H Y M N LXXIX.

A warm Coal for a cold Heart.

MUSING on my habitation,
 Musing on my heav'nly home,
 Fills my soul with holy longing,
 Come, my JESUS, quickly come.
 Vanity, is all I see,
 LORD, I long to be with thee.

HYMN

H Y M N LXXX.

The Example of CHRIST.

I.

MY dear REDEEMER, and my LORD!
 I read my duty in thy word:
 But in thy life, the law appears,
 Drawn out in living characters.

II.

Be thou my pattern; make me bear
 More of thy gracious image here;
 Then God, the Judge, shall own my name,
 Among the foll'wers of the LAMB.

H Y M N LXXXI.

Hope in the Covenant. Heb. vi. 17—19.

I.

HOW oft have sin and Satan strove
 To rend my soul from thee, my God?
 But everlasting is thy love,
 And Jesus seals it with his blood.

II.

The oath and promise of the LORD,
 Join to confirm the wond'rous grace;
 Eternal pow'r performs the word,
 And fills all heav'n with endless praise.

III.

Amidst temptations sharp and long,
 My soul to this dear refuge flies;
 Hope is my anchor, firm and strong,
 While tempests blow, and billows rise.

IV.

The gospel bears my spirit up;
 A faithful and unchanging God
 Lays the foundation for my hope,
 In Oaths, and Promises, and Blood.

HYMN

HYMN LXXXII.

Faith.

I.

FAITH!—'tis a precious grace,
Where'er it is bestow'd!
It boasts of a celestial birth,
And is the gift of God.

II.

JESUS it owns a *King*,
An all-atoning *Priest*,
It claims no merit of its own,
But looks for all in **CHRIST**.

III.

To him it leads the soul,
When fill'd with deep distress;
Flies to the fountain of his blood,
And trusts his righteousness.

VI.

Since 'tis thy work alone,
And that divinely free;
LORD, send the **SPIRIT** of thy **SON**,
To work that Faith in me.

HYMN LXXXIII.

Dismission.

I.

DISMISS us with thy blessing, **LORD**,
Help us to feed upon thy word;
What thou hast seen amiss forgive;
May **CHRIST** the truth within us live!

II.

Tho' we are guilty, thou art good,
Wash all our works in Jesu's blood;
Give ev'ry fetter'd soul release,
And bid us all depart in peace.

HYMN LXXXIV.

Redeeming Love.

NOW begin the heavenly theme,
Sing aloud in Jesu's name,
Ye, who Jesu's kindness prove,
Triumph in *Redeeming Love*.

II.

Ye, who see the FATHER's grace
Beaming in the SAVIOUR's face,
As to Canaan on ye move,
Praise and blefs, *Redeeming Love*.

III.

Mourning souls dry up your tears,
Banish all your guilty fears,
See your guilt and curse remove,
Cancell'd by *Redeeming Love*.

IV.

Ye, alas ! who long have been,
Willing slaves of death and sin,
Now from bliss no longer rove,
Stop—and taste *Redeeming Love*.

V.

Welcome, all by sin oppress'd,
Welcome, to his sacred rest,
Nothing brought him from above,
Nothing but *Redeeming Love*.

VI.

He subdu'd th' infernal pow'rs,
His tremendous foes and ours :
From their cursed empire drove,
Mighty in *Redeeming Love*.

Hither

VII.

Wither then your music bring,
Strike aloud each joyful string,
Mortals join the hosts above,
Join to praise Redeeming Love.

H Y M N LXXXV.

Before Meat.

BE present at our table Lord,
Be here and ev'ry where ador'd;
These creatures bless, and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with thee.

H Y M N LXXXVI.

Another.

THOU SAVIOUR divine,
Most graciously bless
These mercies of thine,
With spiritual grace:
That while we are tasting
Our temporal food,
Our souls may be praising
The goodness of God.

H Y M N LXXXVII.

After Meat.

WE thank thee, Lord, for this our food,
But more because of Jesu's blood;
Let Manna to our souls be giv'n,
The Bread of Life sent down from heav'n.
And O with all thy gifts impart,
The blessing of a thankful heart.

GLORIA PATRI, &c.

Or Hymns of Praise to the ever-blessed
and glorious TRINITY.

H Y M N LXXXVIII.

TO FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST,
The God whom we adore,
Be glory, as it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

H Y M N LXXXIX.

TO GOD the FATHER, SON,
And SPIRIT, glory be!
As 'twas, and is, and shall be so
To all eternity.

H Y M N XC.

TO FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST,
The God whom heav'n and earth adore,
Be glory, as it was of old,
Is now, and shall be evermore.

H Y M N XCI.

BY angels in heav'n
Of ev'ry degree,
And saints upon earth,
All praise be address'd;
To God in Three Persons,
One God ever blest'd,
As it has been, now is,
And always shall be.

H Y M N XCII.

FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST,
One GOD, whom we adore :
Join we with the heav'nly host,
To praise Thee evermore :
Live by heav'n and earth ador'd,
THREE in ONE, and ONE in THREE,
Holy, holy, holy LORD,
All glory be to Thee.

H Y M N XCIII.

SING we to our GOD above,
Praise, eternal as his love :
Praise him, all ye heav'nly host,
FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

H Y M N XCIV.

GIVE to the FATHER praise,
Give glory the SON,
And to the SPIRIT of his grace
Be equal honor done.

H Y M N XCV.

TOUR eternal GOD,
The FATHER and the SON,
And SPIRIT all divine,
THREE MYSTERIES in ONE.
Salvation, pow'r,
And praise be giv'n,
By all on earth,
And all in heav'n.

H Y M N XCVI.

GIVE glory to God,
 Ye children of men,
 And publish abroad
 Again and again,
 The Son's glorious merit,
 The Father's free grace,
 The gifts of the Spirit,
 To Adam's lost race.

H Y M N XCVII.

HOSANNA : or *Salvation ascribed to Christ,*

HOSANNA to the Son,
 Of David and of God,
 Who brought the news of pardon down,
 And bought it with his blood.

To CHRIST th' anointed KING,
 Be endless blessings giv'n;
 Let the whole earth his glory sing,
 Who made our peace with heav'n.

H Y M N XCVIII.

GLORY, honor, praise and power,
 Be unto the LAMB for ever,
 JESUS CHRIST IS OUR REDEEMER,
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
 Praise the Lord.

POST.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE Author returns his sincere thanks to all his Subscribers in general, and begs they will excuse the delay of the publication, owing in some measure to indisposition, and various other causes.—He desires them to be so obliging as to accept the Sermon here subjoined, instead of the Section on Charity.—That Section should have been introduced immediately after that on Fasting, but it was mislaid, and the mistake was not perceived (the Author being at a considerable distance from the press) till it was too late to introduce it in its proper place.

Several errors too have crept into this work, which are noted in the table of *Errata*; the reader is desired to excuse and correct them as they occur.

It is proper too to apprise the reader, that in the Section on Public Worship, he is indebted for several passages, to Mr. *Unwin's* Tract, entitled, "Friendly Reproof and Instruction to those who seldom attend public Worship;" and in those concerning Psalmody, use has been made of the Reverend Mr.

Burrough's

Burrough's discourse on that subject.—In some other parts of the work too, where an argument or illustration occurred to the Author, suitable to the subject then under consideration, and delivered in a striking manner, he took the liberty of introducing it.

Nothing further is here necessary to be added, but an earnest request, in which the Author intreats every reader to join with him, to the Father of all Mercies, and the God of all comforts, that it would please him to give a blessing to the important truths contained in this book.—May it, under the guidance of the good Spirit of God (who often effects great purposes by means of weak instruments) be instrumental in bringing many out of darkness into light, and of turning them from the power of Satan unto God.

22 JY 59